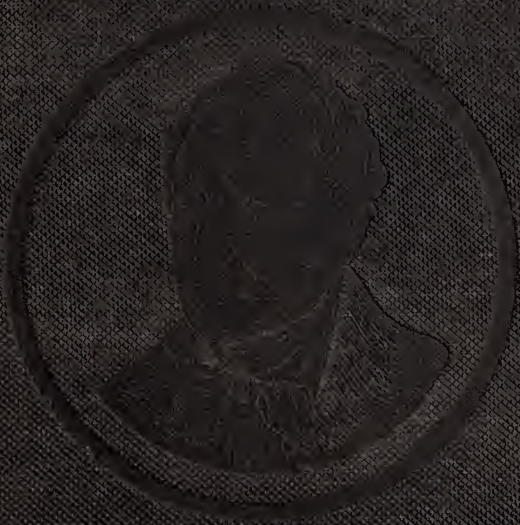

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THE

TRAVELLING BACHELOR;

OR,

NOTIONS OF THE AMERICANS.

BY J. FENIMORE COOPER.

COMPLETE IN ONE VOLUME.

NEW EDITION.

NEW YORK:
STRINGER AND TOWNSEND.

1857.

TRAVELLING BACHELOR.

Eastern District of Pennsylvania, to wit:

******
* *
* L. S. *
* *
****** BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the nineteenth day of July, in the fifty-third year of the independence of the United States of America, A. D. 1828, CAREY, LEA & CAREY, of the said district, have deposited in this office the title of a Book, the right whereof they claim as Proprietors, in the words following, to wit:

"Notions of the Americans. Picked up by a Travelling Bachelor."

In Conformity to the Act of the Congress of the United States, entitled, "An Act for the encouragement of Learning, by securing the copies of Maps, Charts, and Books, to the Authors and Proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned." And also to the Act entitled, "An Act supplementary to an Act, entitled 'An Act for the Encouragement of Learning, by securing the copies of Maps, Charts, and Books, to the Authors and Proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned,' and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching, historical and other Prints."

D. CALDWELL, *Clerk of the*
Eastern District of Pennsylvania

14890-7

DEDICATION.

TO

JOHN CADWALLADER,

OF CADWALLADER,

IN THE

STATE OF NEW-YORK, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Without your aid and kindness these pages could never have been written. Whatever other people may think of their merit, it is quite probable that you and I believe they contain some truths. We must therefore endeavour to keep each other in good humour, provided they shall happen to be neglected rather more than our joint opinions may lead us to think they deserve.

Shortly after my return to the queen of cities, there was a happy reunion of all the remaining members of the club. I know you will be glad to hear, that, with a solitary exception, this embraced every man whose name has stood on the roll since its forma-

tion. But, alas! there is an exception. The poor Dane has fallen. The worthy professor trusted himself, for too long a time, in sedentary employments in a warm climate. I write it with grief, but he was married at Verona, about eleven o'clock on the morning of the 16th August last, to the daughter of an Italian physician. Jules Béthizy and Waller were both at Florence when he was first taken, and they flew to his assistance with the earnestness of a long tried friendship. But remedies were too late. From the first moment the symptoms seemed threatening; and as the best advice was fortunately so close at hand, there is reason to think the malady was perfectly incurable. Béthizy has some suspicions of foul play, and makes dark allusions to philters and amulets; but the father of the fair infection solemnly protests that the whole is the effect of sun and solitude. We have done all that remained to sorrowing friends. An epithalamium has been written by the Russian, and it was set to solemn music by the Abbate. A brass plate has been let into the back of the *fauteuil* of the derelict, containing an appropriate inscription, and two *memento mori* are cut in its sides A wedding ring has also been

attached to the nose of the portrait, which, as I have often told you, is always suspended over the chair of a member.

The question of a successor has been deeply agitated among us. Nothing but the exceeding liberality which pervades and col ours our meetings could have insured the result which has grown out of the election. Yes, my friend, the empty *fauteuil* is yours; and, as I know you have destroyed the coat of arms of your European ancestors, I have caused a design of my own to be emblazoned in the proper place. It is a constellation of twenty-four stars, surrounded by a cloud of *nebulæ* with a liberty-cap for a crest, and two young negroes as supporters. I was obliged to adopt this equivocal blazonry, in order to quiet all parties, for the election was not without a struggle. A great deal was said about liberality, but I believe you know that liberality always infers certain reservations. The Abbate objected a good deal to the preponderance of the Protestant interest, and I thought Waller was a little jealous of having a member who might introduce a dialect of his mother tongue. But Jules Béthizy stood by you like a man, and the Russian swore you were his neighbour, and

that *in* you *should* come. In short, the question was carried; and now the agony is over, both the Baronet and the Priest put the best possible face on it.

Come to us, then, dear John, as soon as you can tear yourself from the delights of home. We contemplate a great and general movement during the next three years' recess, and an honourable station shall be assigned you in the task of peregrination. There is a good deal of distrust manifested by some unbelievers in our body concerning the matter detailed in my letters; but *n'importe*, thirty years ago most of the worthy members did not know the colour of the skin of the people concerning whom I have written. They who live thirty years hence may live long enough to discover, that what now seems so marvellous will then be deemed quite a matter of course.—Adieu.

PREFACE.

The writer of these Letters is not without some of the yearnings of paternity in committing the offspring of his brain to the world. His chief concern is that the book may pass as near as possible for what it was intended in the design, however it may fall short in the execution.

A close and detailed statistical work on the United States of America, could not keep its place as authority for five years. What is true this year would the next become liable to so many explanations, that the curious would soon cease to consult its pages. The principles of the government, and the general state of society, are certainly more permanent; but the latter varies rapidly in the different stages of a life that is so progressive. Nothing more has, therefore, been attempted here, than to give a hasty and general sketch of most things of interest, and to communicate what is told in as unpretending and familiar a way as the subjects themselves would conveniently allow.

The facts of these volumes are believed to be, in common, correct. The Author claims no exemption from error; but as he has given some thought and a great deal of time to the subjects on which he has treated, he hopes that refutation will not easily attack him in the shape of evidence. His reasoning—if rapid, discursive, and ill-arranged arguments can aspire to so high a name—must, of course, depend on its own value. A great number will certainly condemn it, for it as certainly opposes the opinions of a vast number of very honest people in Europe. Still, as he has no one object but

the good of all his fellow-creatures in view, he hopes no unworthy motive will be ascribed to his publication.

A great number of readers will be indisposed to believe that the United States of America are of the importance which the writer does not disguise he has attempted to show that they are of to the rest of the world. On this subject there must, probably, remain a diversity of opinion that time only can decide. As it is quite probable that in this unfortunate dispute there will be many against him, the Author will endeavour to content himself with the consideration that time is working much faster than common on the points that are most involved in the matter. He is quite satisfied with the umpire.

There is a much graver offence against the rights of readers than any contained in the opinions of this work. A vast deal has been printed that should not have been, and much has been omitted that might have been properly said. But circumstances allowed of no choice between great and acknowledged imperfections, or total silence. Something of the extent of this demerit, therefore, must depend on the fact of whether enough has been told to justify publication at all. The writer has not treated the public with so little ceremony as to usher a work on their notice without, at least, believing a fair proportion of this apology is contained in its pages. If he deceive himself, it will be his misfortune; and if he does not deceive his readers, he shall rejoice.

The circumstances to which allusion has just been made, involve haste in printing no less than haste in selection. There are errors of style, and some faults of grammar, that are perhaps the mutual neglect of the author, the copyists, and the printers. The word "assured" is, for instance, used for "insured," and adverbs have, in several cases, been converted into adjectives. In one or two instances, negatives have been introduced where it was not intended to use them. But they who detect most of these blunders will know how to make allowances for their existence; and to those who do

not, it will be a matter of but little interest. The Author has far less ambition to be thought a fine writer, than to be thought an accurate observer and a faithful narrator of what he has witnessed.

It will be seen that much use has been made of the opinions and information of a native American. Without some such counsellor, the facts of this book could never have been collected. There is, perhaps, no Christian country on earth in which a foreigner is so liable to fall into errors as in the United States of America. The institutions, the state of society, and even the impulses of the people, are in some measure new and peculiar. The European, under such circumstances, has a great deal to *unlearn* before he can begin to learn correctly.

America has commonly been viewed in the exceptions rather than in the rules. This is a common fault with all travellers, since it at once gratifies their spleen and indulges their laziness. It is a bad compliment to human nature, but not the less true, to say that no young traveller enters a foreign country without early commencing the task of invidious comparison. This is natural enough, certainly, for we instantly miss the things to which we have been accustomed, and which may owe half their value to use; and it requires time and habit to create new attachments. This trait of character is by no means confined to Europe. The writer can assure his contemporaries, that few men travel among foreign nations with a more laudable disdain than the native of the States of which these volumes treat. He has his joke and his sneer, and not unfrequently his reason, as well as the veriest *petit-mâitre* of the Thuilleries, or any exquisite of a London club-house Ere long he will begin to make books too; and as he has an unaccommodating manner of separating the owner from the soil, it is not improbable that he may find a process by which he will give all due interest to the recollections of former ages, while he pays a passing tribute to this.

The writer has not the smallest doubt that many orthodox unbelievers will listen to what he has said of America in this work, with incredulous ears. He invites all such stout adherents to their own preconceived opinions, to submit to a certain examination of facts that are perfectly within their reach. He would propose that they inquire into the state of America as it existed fifty years ago, and that they then compare it with its present condition. After they have struck a balance between the two results, they can safely be left to their own ruminations as to the probability of a people, as barbarous, as ignorant, and as disorganized, as they have been accustomed to consider the Americans, being very likely to work such miracles. When they have honestly come to a conclusion, it is possible they may be disposed to give some credit to the contents of the following pages.

It is not pretended that the actual names of the individuals to whom these letters are addressed are given in the text. It is hoped that eight or ten single gentlemen can meet once in three years in a club, and that they can pass the intermediate time in journeying about the world, occasionally publishing a few ideas on what they have seen, without being reduced to the necessity of doing so much violence to their modesty as to call each other unequivocally by their proper appellations. Had they not been disposed to lives of free comment and criticism, it is more than probable that they would have all been married men these ——— years.

One more word on the subject-matter of these pages, and the writer will commit them to the judgment of his readers without further interruption. In producing a work on the United States, the truth was to be dealt with fearlessly, or the task had better be let alone. In such a country, existing facts are, however, of consequence only as they are likely to affect the future. It is of little moment to know that so many houses are in a town, or so many straw beds in such a house, when premises are at hand to demonstrate clearly, that in a year or two the roofs of the city will be doubled, and the inmates of

the dwelling will repose on down. The highest compliment that is, or that can be, paid to the people of the United States, is paid by writers, who are evidently guilty of their politeness under any other state of feeling than that of complacency. The Englishman, for instance (he is quoted, because the most industrious in the pursuit,) lands in America, and he immediately commences the work of comparison between the republics and his own country. He is careful enough to avoid all those topics which might produce an unfavourable result (and they are sufficiently numerous), but he instantly seizes on some unfortunate tavern, or highway, or church, or theatre, or something else of the kind, which he puts in glaring contrast with, not the worst, nor the middling, but the best similar object in his own country. Really there must be something extraordinary in a people, who, having had so much to do, and so very short a time to do it in, have already become the subjects, not only of envy, but of a seemingly formidable rivalry, to one of the oldest and wealthiest nations of Europe! It strikes the writer, that, while these gentlemen are so industriously struggling to prove the existence of some petty object of spleen, they prove a great moral truth in favour of America. What should we think of the boy whose intellect, and labours, and intelligence, were drawn into bold and invidious comparison with those of aged and experienced men!

The writer has said very little on the subject of the ordinary vices of mankind; for he has hoped that no one will read his book, who has yet to learn that they exist every where. If any one shall suppose that he wishes to paint the people of America as existing in a state superior to human passion, free from all uncharitableness and guile, he takes the liberty to assure him he will fall into an egregious blunder. He has not yet met with such an elysium in his travels.

If the bile of any one shall be stirred by the anticipations in which the writer has indulged in favour of the United States of America, he shall be sorry; but as he cannot see

how the truth is to be affected, or the fortunes of a great people materially varied, by the dissatisfaction of this or that individual, he has thought it safest for his own reputation to say what he thinks, without taking the pains to ascertain to how many it may be agreeable, or to how many disagreeable. He has avoided personalities, and that, as a traveller, is all he feels bound to do, and hopes he shall always do; for he is not of that impertinent class, who think the world cannot be sufficiently enlightened without invading the sacred precincts of private life

LETTERS,

&c. &c.

TO SIR FREDERICK WALLER, BART

OF SOMERSETSHIRE, ENGLAND.

Liverpool, England, July 22d, 1824.

DEAR WALLER,

You are to express no astonishment at the place where this letter is dated. I confess the engagement to meet you under the walls of the Seraglio; but hear me, before the sin of forgetfulness shall be too hastily imputed to my charge. You know the inveterate peregrinating habits of the club, and can judge, from your own besetting propensity to change your residence monthly, how difficult it might prove to resist the temptation of traversing a soil that is still virgin, so far as the perambulating feet of the members of our fraternity are concerned. In a word, I am here, awaiting the packet for America. Before you get this letter, the waters of one half of the Atlantic will roll between us. This resolution, seemingly so sudden, has not, however, been taken without much and mature thought.

Cosmopolites, and searchers of the truth, as we boast ourselves, who, of all our number, has ever turned his steps towards a quarter (I had almost written half) of the globe, where new scenes, a state of society without a parallel, even in history, and so much that is fresh, both in the physical and moral world,

invite our attention? This reproach shall exist no longer. If resentment against so much apparent fickleness can refrain the while, read, and you shall know the reasons why you are left to wander, alone, through the streets of Pera, and to endure sullen looks, from haughty Turks, without the promised support of your infidel companion.

On the road between Moscow and Warsaw, I encountered a traveller from the states of North America. He was about to end a long pilgrimage, in Europe, Asia, and Africa, and to return, eager as a discharged Swiss, to the haunts of his youth, in the other hemisphere. He appeared like one who was wearied with the selfishness, struggles, and fac titious distinctions of our eastern regions. Truly, there was something so naïf, and yet so instructed—so much that was intellectual, and withal so simple—a little that was proud, blended with something philosophical, in the temperament and manner of this western voyager, that he came over my fancy with the freshness of those evening breezes, for which you will be shortly panting, on the shores of the Dardanelles. To be serious, he was an educated and a gifted man, with a simplicity of thought, as well as of deportment, that acted like a charm on my exhausted feelings. You are not to suppose that, at fifty, I have fallen into the errors of five-and-twenty, and, that I am about to become, again, a convert to thrice-worn-out opinions, new vamped, under the imposing name of philosophy. The word has never escaped the lips of Cadwallader (for so is my new acquaintance called), even in the gravest of his moods.

An evening, passed in the company of this American, at a miserable post-house on the frontiers of Poland, only furnished a zest for the week in which it was agreed we should travel together. At the end of that week, my resolution was taken. I had heard so much to excite curiosity—so much to awaken thought,

in channels entirely new, that nothing short of a voyage across the Atlantic can appease my longings.

Neither are you to be too hasty in believing, that my companion has been soothing my ears with Arabian imagery. Nothing can be farther from the truth. He is saturnine by nature, and, a Frenchman might add, taciturn to a fault. From a certain expression of melancholy, that often overshadows his countenance, I should think he had long been familiar with regrets, which, from their nature, must be unceasing. Still, I find great equanimity of temper, and the same calm, deliberative manner of considering things, as if he deemed himself already removed from most of the great and moving interests of the world. Perhaps these peculiar and individual qualities, in some measure, quickened the desire I felt to examine his country. I would give much, to know his private history; but I never before associated with one who was, at the same time, so communicative, and, yet, so reserved.

In short, I found this calm, reasoning American so fresh, so original in his way of treating things, which long use had rendered, to my imagination, fixed and unalterable as the laws of nature themselves, and so direct in the application of all his opinions to the practices of the world, that I early became alive to the desire of examining a state of society, which, I am fond of believing, must have had some influence in giving birth to so much independence and manliness of thought.

Before we had reached the Rhine, it was arranged between us, that we should cross the ocean together; and Cadwallader promised me his assistance and advice, in making the preparations that might be necessary, to render the journey both convenient and profitable.

You will readily imagine, that, with the intention of passing a year or two in the republics of North

America, my curiosity to investigate their history and institutions has not been suffered to slumber. While in London, no opportunity of inquiring into the character of the people, or of supplying myself with matter of proper preliminary study, was neglected. As I believed the English must, of necessity, possess a better knowledge of their transatlantic kinsmen than any other people in Europe, I was diligent in storing my memory with such facts, gleaned from the most approved authorities, as might aid and direct my inquiries. By dint of extraordinary exertions, I soon succeeded in collecting a little library of travels, pamphlets, and political dissertations. This collection was scrupulously kept a secret until complete, when, anxious to impress my companion with a favourable opinion of my earnestness in the research, an early opportunity was taken to lay the result before him, in the shape of a handsome display on the shelves of a book-case. Cadwallader ran his eye coolly over the titles, and, after saying a few words in commendation of my zeal, he appeared disposed to leave me to the quiet enjoyment of my acquisitions. I was struck with the singular air of indifference, to give it no harsher term, with which he regarded the fruits of my hard labour, and was not slow to ascribe it to the fact, that I had omitted those works of native origin, which treated on the same subject. In order to remove any unfavourable impressions on this point, something was muttered concerning regrets at not being able to procure American books at such a distance from the place where they were printed, with an intimation, that on our arrival at New-York, my travelling library would of course be completed. Still no sign of interest was elicited from the cold eye of my companion. He left me with another compliment to my industry, which, I am obliged to confess, was pointed with so much supererogatory courtesy, as to savour a little of sarcasm. Nothing daunted, however, by this

silent but intelligible criticism, no time was lost in turning the new acquisitions to a profitable account. Our stay in London was unavoidably prolonged to three weeks, and by the expiration of that time I had travelled over no small portion of the American territory, again and again, on paper, and at rates, too, that would not have done discredit to the time-saving authors of the books themselves. In short, the opinions of some six or seven English commentators on American society and morals, were devoured so very greedily, as to leave little or no leisure for a proper digestion of the knowledge they imparted. But, once possessed of sufficient matter for reflection, a voyage of three thousand miles will afford abundant leisure for rumination and digestion.

Our arrival at this place had been so timed, as to precede the departure of the packet by a few days. The intervening period has given us an opportunity to complete the most minute of our arrangements, among which I have ever kept in view the important object of acquiring that information which may be useful in my contemplated journey by land. A Liverpool banker, to whom I had early spoken on the subject, placed in my hands two volumes of travels in America, written by a merchant of this city, of the name of Hodgson, in which he gave me reason to believe I should find, mingled with a large portion of good sense, far more liberality than it was usual to meet in the works of his countrymen when writing on the subject of their republican relatives. You are not to frown, dear Waller, when I add, that even my own dulness had already been able to detect, in the contents of most of my newly acquired treasures, a certain distorted manner of viewing and of portraying things, which struck me as manifesting a remarkable attachment to caricature. This amiable peculiarity may perhaps furnish a sufficiently intelligible clue to the small favour that the books seemed to enjoy in the

eyes of Cadwallader. Under the expectation that the work of Mr. Hodgson would afford him pleasure, I laid it on the table of my companion, and begged that he would bestow on its perusal a few of those hours for which I knew he had no very urgent employment.

It was morning when he was put in possession of the book, and the day was purposely permitted to pass without any interruption from me. Late at night, I entered his apartment, and found him occupied in sealing a note directed to myself. As this letter may be supposed to contain the sentiments of an intelligent American on a subject which may not be without its interest, I shall freely copy it. It may possibly contain expressions that are not quite in unison with the temper of an Englishman; but you, as a man of the world, will know how to tolerate independence of feeling, and are far too wise to neglect any favourable opportunity of acquiring information that may, in the course of events, very speedily become useful.

I may have misconceived your interest in this note; still it is curious, as containing the opinions of a perfectly disinterested, and certainly an instructed American. It may also serve for a sort of preface to my own disjointed correspondence, the scattered fragments of which shall be collected at our regular triennial meeting, when they may possibly serve to enliven the gloom of a December day in Paris.*

Forgive me, that I prefer the rising stars of the Western Constellation to the waning moon of your Turk.—Adieu.

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* See note A, at the end of the volume.

TO THE BARON VON KEMPERFELT,

CAPTAIN IN THE NAVY OF HIS NETHERLANDS MAJESTY

At Sea, August, 1824.

As I know that Sir Edward has given you a meeting at Rome, I shall presume you acquainted with the change in my plans, no less than with the new travelling companion with whom accident has made me acquainted. Of all our associates I could gladly have chosen you, my dear baron, for a co-adventurer in this distant excursion. There is so much of the true maritime spirit in the people I am about to visit, that your experience and observation would have proved both useful and pleasant assistants to my own comparative ignorance. Still, I flatter myself that a life of adventure, and fifty voyages by sea, furnish some few of the qualifications necessary for the task I have assumed.

Cadwallader took the direction of all our arrangements into his own hands; and well has he discharged the trust. But the individual enterprise of the Americans has left very little of this nature to be performed by the traveller. Capacious, beautiful, and excellent ships, sail, on stated days, between many of the European ports and their own country. This system of arrangement, so important to commercial interests, and so creditable to the efforts of a young state, is said to be extended still further. Lines of packets, as they are termed, also exist between New-York and the West Indies, South America, and between most of the larger havens of their own sea-board. They are not straitened, filthy, inconvenient vessels, such as too often aspire to convey passengers in Europe; but ships that are not only commodious to

a degree I could not have anticipated, but even gorgeous in many of their ornaments and equipments. The sea, at the best, to those who, like myself, fail of its true inspiration, is but a desolate and weary abiding place; but, as much as possible seems effected in this ship towards lulling one into a forgetfulness of its disagreeables. Should I venture to hazard a criticism on so delicate a subject, it would be to say, that I do not think the utmost judgment is manifested in the manner and nature of our food. It is vain to expect the dainties of the land, in any perfection, when a thousand miles from its numberless facilities; meats and poultries become meagre and tasteless at sea, for want of room and exercise; and the cookery of a camboose, can never equal that of a well-ordered and scientific *cuisine*. There is a sort of coquetry about most of your profession, which renders them ambitious of demonstrating their perfect equality with the occupants of *terra firma*. Like a beauty on the decline, they would fain continue the charms of other days and other scenes, when common sense, which in these matters is taste, would teach them that the fitness of things embraces time and place. In the midst of sea-sickness and nausea, the stomach is not very craving for old acquaintances, though it might be tempted by the instigation of novelties. On this principle, I think, always with deep and reverential deference, that you sailors, especially in passages that do not exceed a month, should endeavour to purchase your culinary renown by sea-pies and chowders, and other dishes that are in good nautical keeping, instead of emulating the savoury properties of roast beef and *poulets*, in lame and tasteless imitations. Enough, however, on a subject that a landsman can never approach, but he is suspected of an intention of literally taking the "bread out of your mouths."

At Liverpool I was struck with the number of

vessels that bore the American ensign. By far the greater part of the immense trade which exists between England and the United States, is carried on from that port; and it was evident to the senses, (a fact which inquiry has served to corroborate), that an undue proportion, or rather disproportion, of that trade, is conducted under the flag of the latter country. No political restrictions, to prevent a perfect reciprocity of commercial rights, being in existence, this simple circumstance is almost enough, in itself, to establish the ability of the American, to compete successfully with the Englishman, in navigation. As the subject is replete with interest, and most probably pregnant with facts that may much sooner than is now dreamed of, effect a division (if not a transfer) of the commerce, and consequently of the wealth of the civilized world, most of my time, during the passage, has been devoted to its investigation. Cadwallader is not only well supplied with documents, but he is rich in knowledge and experience on matters that relate to his own country; and, by his aid, there is some reason to believe my industry on this occasion, at least, has not been entirely thrown away. Worthless, or not, such as it is I shall offer its results, with proper humility, to the inspection of your professional criticism. To you, who are known to indulge in such flattering views of the future, when allusion is made to the golden days of De Ruyter and Van Tromp, the subject may have a charm of its own.

The tendency to the sea, which the American has manifested since the earliest of the colonial establishments, is, no doubt, to be ascribed originally to the temper of his ancestors. Nothing can be more absurd, however, than to argue, that although peculiar circumstances drew him on the ocean, during the continuance of the late and general hostilities, he will return to his fertile valleys and vast prairies, now that competitors for the profits of commerce and naviga-

tion are arising among the former belligerents. The argument implies an utter ignorance of history, no less than of the character and sagacity of a people who are never tardy to discover their individual interests. It is, notwithstanding, often urged with so much pertinacity, as to savour much more of the conclusions of what we hope for, than of what our reason would teach us to believe. The fact is, there never has been a period, since society was first firmly organized in their country, when the Anglo-Americans have not possessed a tonnage greater, in proportion to their population and means, than that of any other people, some of the small commercial cities, perhaps, alone excepted. This was true, even previously to their revolution, when the mother country monopolized all of trade and industry that the temper of the colonies would bear, and it is true now, to an extent of which you have probably no suspicion. The present population of the United States may be computed at 12,000,000, while the amount of shipping materially exceeds 1,400,000 tons.* Assuming that amount, however, it gives one ton to every eight and a half of the inhabitants. The tonnage of the British empire is in round numbers, 2,500,000. This, divided among the 23,000,000 of the British islands alone, would give but one ton to every nine of the inhabitants. In this calculation the vast difference in wealth is forgotten. But by the British Empire, we are to understand Canada, the West Indies, and all the vast possessions which are tributary to the wealth and power of that great nation. I know not whether the shipping employed in the East Indies ought to be enumerated in the amount named. If it is, you will see the dispro portion in favour of America is enormous. But assum ing that it is not, it becomes necessary to add several millions for their other dependencies. There is, how

* On the 30th Dec. 1826, it had swelled to 1,534,000.

ever, still another point of view in which this comparison should, with strict justice, be made. A large proportion of the people of the United States are so situated, that in the nature of things they cannot turn much, if any, of their attention to navigation. If the slaves and the inhabitants of the new states, where the establishments are still too infant, to admit of such a developement of their resources, be deducted from the whole amount of the population, it will not leave more than 7,000,000 of souls in possession of those districts in which navigation can be supposed at all to exist. The latter, too, will include all those states that are called interior, where time has not been given to effect any thing like a natural division of the employments of men. The result will show, that the Americans, relatively considered, are addicted to navigation, as compared with Great Britain, in the proportion of more than seven to five; nor has this commercial, or rather maritime spirit arisen under auspices so encouraging as is generally imagined.

The navigation laws, adopted by the United States, so soon as their present constitution went into operation, are generally known. Their effect was to bring the shipping of the country into instant competition with that of foreign nations, from the state of temporary depression into which it had been thrown by the struggle of the Revolution. From that hour, the superiority enjoyed by the American, in cheapness of construction, provisions and naval stores, aided by the unrivalled activity, and practical knowledge of the population, put all foreign competition at defiance. Of 606,000 tons of shipping employed in 1790, in the foreign trade of the country, not less than 251,000 tons were the property of strangers. In 1794, while the trade employed 611,000 tons, but 84,000 tons were owned by foreigners. In 1820 (a year of great depression) the trade gave occupation to 880,000 tons, of which no more than 79,000 tons were foreign prop-

erty. This estimate, however, includes the intercourse with the least, no less than that with the most maritime nation. The trade between the United States and England, which is the most important of all, in respect of the tonnage it employs, was about three to one, in favour of the former; with other countries it varies according to the maritime character of the people, but with all and each it is altogether in favour of the United States.

Now, one would think these simple facts, which have withstood the tests of colonial policy, and of political independence; of peace and of war; of a fair and of a specious neutrality; of open violence and of self-imposed restrictions, for more than a century, might be deemed conclusive of the ability no less than of the disposition of the Americans to continue what they now are—a people more maritime in their habits and pursuits, compared with their numbers, than any that exist, or who have ever gone before them. Still there are real or pretended sceptics. It is contended that a continental nation, possessed of territories so vast, and which are peopled by so spare a population, cannot continue in pursuits to which nature and interest present so many obstacles. The proposition is somewhat as if one should say, Russia is a country of extensive territory, that is but thinly peopled, and so is America. Now, as Russia is not, neither therefore can America be maritime. Nor are the arguments by which this singular proposition is supported, less absurd than the position itself. Notwithstanding the obstinate, glaring, and long-continued fact, that the American has and does neglect the tillage of his virgin forests, in order to seek more congenial sources of wealth on the ocean, one hears it hotly contended every day, that this state of things has been created by adventitious circumstances, and must cease as the influence of those circumstances ceases, and that of others shall come into action. You are told

that America has such an interior of fertile plains as belongs to few nations; but you are not reminded by these partisans, that she also possesses such an extent of coast, such rivers, such bays, and such a number of spacious and commodious havens, as are the property of no other people. If, in reply, you venture to say that as England, for so long a time the most commercial and maritime nation of the world, is indebted to her civil and religious liberty for the character of industry and enterprise that she has so well earned, so must America, possessing these inestimable blessings in a still greater degree, arrive at a still greater degree of commercial and maritime prosperity, the answer is ready. England is an island, and she has an overflowing population. Java and Japan, Ceylon and Madagascar, Sicily and Zealand, and hundreds of others, are just as much islands as Great Britain. It is therefore clear, something more than a mere insular situation is necessary to induce a people to become maritime, since there is a superabundance of population in all the islands just named. England herself was not eminently maritime until the reign of Elizabeth, when the influence of that civil and religious liberty which has made her what she is, began to be felt fairly and generally in the realm. So late as the reign of Henry VII., the "world-seeking Genoese" was compelled to find a patroness to his mighty enterprise in the queen of an interior province of the Spanish Peninsula! Though Turkey in Europe is not actually washed by the water on every side, still there are few countries (including Greece) that possess so many natural advantages for commerce and navigation. That her flag is not now seen in every sea, is to be ascribed more to the mental darkness which envelops her empire, than to the immaterial fact that nature has forgotten to run a strait between the Euxine and the Adriatic. France lies on two seas, and has long enjoyed the advantages of science and great

intelligence; and yet France, considered with reference to her civilization and resources, is but a secondary power in respect to commerce and navigation. If she has had fleets, they have not been the healthful and vigorous offspring of her trade, but were maintained, as they were created, by the more sickly efforts of political care. Does any man believe, were the Pyrenees and Alps another channel, that the condition of France, in this particular, would be materially altered? The talents, and science, and enterprise of France, have hitherto been mainly pressed into the employment of the government. In whatever they have arrived at perfection, they have been concentrated in order to consolidate the power of the state, instead of being dispersed to effect that vast accumulation of individual prosperity which constitutes the real wealth of nations. Precisely as the situation of England offers an exception to this general rule, just in that degree has there been a misapplication also of her advantages. In the one instance, a mighty aristocracy has been created; in the other, as mighty a despotism. The latter country has now become constitutional; and though she has to contend against long and inveterate habits, a national temperament created by those habits, and many of the obstacles of what may almost be termed, in this respect, an infant condition, I think it will be found that she will become more commercial, and consequently more maritime, precisely as her institutions become more free. The secret of all enterprise and energy exists in the principle of individuality. Wealth does not more infallibly beget wealth, than the right to the exercise of our faculties begets the desire to use them. The slave is every where indolent, vicious, and abject; the freeman active, moral, and bold. It would seem that is the best and safest, and, consequently, the wisest government, which is content rather to protect than direct the national prosperity, since the latter system never

fails to impede the efforts of that individuality which makes men industrious and enterprising. As all questions of politics are, however, so perfectly practical, I well know that in deciding on particular governments, they should ever be considered with direct reference to the varied conditions into which abuse, accident, or wisdom, has cast the different communities of the world. But, if one can be found so favoured by its physical advantages, so fortified by its moral and intellectual superiority, as to enable it to leave man to the freest and noblest exercise of his energies and will, is it wise, or is it even safe, to deny, merely because they are vast, the very results which are admitted to be produced, in a lesser degree, by a state of things in which the same operating causes are found to exist under more limited modifications? Herein, as it appears to me, is to be traced the real motive of that glaring unwillingness to allow the natural effects of the unprecedented liberty of America, which one must be blind not to see, has taken so deep root in the feelings of most of our eastern politicians. The American himself, familiar with the changes and improvements of his own time, big with the spirit that has wrought them, and filled with the noblest and most manly anticipations for the future, is derided because he cannot bring his wishes to the level of the snail-paced and unnatural progress of European society. I say unnatural, because power, or necessity if you will, has so heavily cumbered it with artificial restrictions. I have had leisure for some thought, dear Baron, on this subject. I fear it is a theme that is disposed of with too little ceremony by most of us who dwell in the ancient hemisphere. Europe, with all her boasted intelligence, has not even the merit of foreseeing results that only become apparent as they force themselves on her unwilling notice. For one I am determined, in my own poor person, to profit as much as may be by the situation into which I have

been accidentally thrown. Notwithstanding that I am already deeply impressed with the opinion that America is to be the first maritime nation of the earth, it would be unpardonable ignorance to deny that the great causes which are likely to induce this division, if not transfer, of commercial ascendancy, are liable to many qualifying and counteracting obstacles. Most of these minor circumstances were either beyond the investigations of a stranger, or it exceeded my knowledge of American history, to estimate the extent of their influence. With a view to throw as much light as possible on the inquiry, I have addressed a few questions to my travelling companion, and have received his answers, which are transcribed for your benefit. If they are coloured by national partialities, a man of your age and experience ought to be able to detect them; and if, on the other hand, they are just and reasonable, it is due to ourselves and the truth, to admit their force. You will at once perceive, that, in putting my queries, I have been governed by those points which one hears pressed the most when the European is willing to turn his eyes from the contemplation of more interesting, because more familiar, objects, in order to inquire into the new order of things, that is almost insensibly, though so rapidly, working a change in the comparative conditions of the different states of Christendom. You will find my queries, with their answers, inclosed.* Neither our situations nor inclinations admitted that the one or the other should be very elaborate.

There is a cry of land, and I must hasten on deck to revel in the cheerful sight. Adieu.

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* See note B, at end of the volume.

TO THE BARON VON KEMPERFELT,

&c. &c.

New-York,——

I THREW aside my pen abruptly, dear Baron, in order to catch a first view of America. There is something so imposing in the sound of the word—*continent*, that I believe it had served to lead me into a delusion, at which a little reflection has induced me to be the first to smile. My ideas of this remote and little known moiety of the world, have ever been so vague and general, that I confess the folly of having expected to see the land make its appearance *en masse*, and with a dignity worthy of its imposing name. The mind has been so long accustomed to divide the rest of the globe into parts, and to think of them in their several divisions of countries and provinces, that one expects to see no more of each. at a *coup d'œil*, than what the sight can embrace.*

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* The Americans say, it is a common and absurd blunder of the European to blend all his images of America in one confused whole. Thus one talks of the climate of America! of the soil of America! and even of the people and manners of America! (meaning always the continent too, and not the United States.) No doubt there are thousands who know better; but still there is a good deal of truth in the charge. The writer was frequently amused, during his voyage, by hearing the passengers (mostly Americans) relate the ridiculous mistakes that have been made by Europeans, otherwise well informed, when conversing on the subject of the transatlantic continent. Countries which lie on different sides of the equator, are strangely brought into contact, and people, between whom there is little affinity of manners, religion, government, language, or, indeed, of any thing else, are strangely blended in one and the same image. It would seem to be an every-day occurrence, for Americans to have inquiries made concerning individuals, estates, or events which exist, or have had an existence, at some two or three thousand miles from

Now, ridiculous as it may seem, I had, unaccountably, imbibed the impression that America was to appear, at the first glance, larger to the senses than the little island I had left behind me. You are at perfect liberty to make yourself just as merry as you please at this acknowledgment; but, if the truth could be fairly sifted, I have no doubt it would be found that most European adventurers, who seek these western regions, have formed expectations of its physical or moral attributes, quite as extravagant as was my own unfortunate image of its presence. I have taken the disappointment as a salutary admonition, that a traveller has no right to draw these visionary scenes, and then quarrel with the people he has come to visit, because he finds that he has seen fit to throw into a strong light, those parts which nature has every where been pleased to keep in shadow; or to colour highest the moral properties, which the same wise dame has sagaciously kept down, in order that those qualities, which it has been her greatest delight to lavish on man, may for ever stand the boldest and most prominent in her own universal picture.

Instead of beholding, on reaching the deck, some immense mountain, clad in a verdant dress of luxuriant and unknown vegetation, lifting its tall head out of the sea, and imperiously frowning on the sister element, my first view was of that same monotonous waste with which my eyes had been sated to weariness, during the last three weeks. The eager question of "Where is America?" was answered by Cadwallader, who silently pointed to a little, blue, cloud-like mound, that rose above the western horizon in three or four undulating swells, and then fell away to the north and to the south, losing itself in the water. I

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their own places of residence, just as if the Dane should be expected to answer interrogatories concerning the condition of a farm situate on the Po!

believe I should have expressed my disappointment aloud, but for the presence, and, more particularly for the air of my companion. His eye was riveted on the spot with all the fondness of a child who is greeting the countenance of a well-beloved parent. It appeared to me that it penetrated far beyond those little hills of blue, and that it was gifted with power to roam over the broad valleys, vast lakes, and thousand rivers of his native land. I fancied that his philanthropic spirit was deeply enjoying those scenes of domestic happiness, of quiet, of abundance, and of peace, which he has so often assured me exist, beyond a parallel, within her borders. Perhaps a secret consciousness of my own absurdity, came in season, also, to prevent so unfortunate an exposure of my high-wrought expectations.

The season of the year, a soft, balmy, southerly breeze, and the air from the land, however, were all present to restore good-humour. The little hillocks soon swelled into modest mountains; and then a range of low, sandy, and certainly not inviting, coast, was gradually rising along the western margin of the view. The sea was dotted with a hundred sails, all of which were either receding from, or approaching, a low point that was as yet scarcely visible, and which extended a few miles to the northward of the high land already mentioned. Beyond, in that direction, nothing more was as yet apparent, than the tame view of the sea. Three or four small schooners were lying off and on, under jib and mainsail, gliding about, like so many marine birds soaring over their native waters. From time to time, they threw pilots on board of, or received them from, the different ships that were quitting or entering the haven within the Cape. On the whole, the scene was lively, cheering, and, compared to the past, filled with the most animating expectations.

It was not long before a beautiful little sloop, of a

formation and rig quite different from any I had ever before seen, came skimming the waves directly in our track. Her motion was swift and graceful, and likely to bring us soon within speaking distance. It was a fishing smack, out of which the captain was disposed to obtain some of the delicious bass that are said to abound on certain banks that lie along this coast. We were disappointed of our treat, for the fisherman answered the signal by intimating that he had sold the last of his stock, but the manœuvres of the two vessels brought us near enough to hail. "Is there any news?" roared the captain, through his trumpet, while we were gliding past each other. The answer came against the breeze, and was nearly indistinct. The words "Cadmus in," were, however, affirmed by more than one eager listener, to form part of the reply. Every body now pressed about our commander, to inquire who or what was this Cadmus and what he or she might be in? But the captain was not able to gratify our curiosity. Cadmus was the name of a ship in the French trade, it seemed, and formed one in a line of packets between Havre and New-York, just as our own vessel did between the latter port and Liverpool. "It is not surprising that she should be in," continued our honest commander, "for she sailed on the 13th, whereas, we only got clear of the land, as you well know, gentlemen, on the 18th of the same month; a passage of one and twenty days, at this season of the year, cannot be called a bad one." As it was quite evident the ideas of the worthy seaman were in a channel very different from our own, we were fain to wait for some more satisfactory means of arriving at the truth. Another opportunity was not long wanting. A large coasting schooner passed within two hundred feet of us. A tar was standing on her quarter-deck, both hands thrust into the bosom of his sea-jacket, eyeing our ship with a certain understanding air that need not be explained

to one who claims himself to be so promising a child of Neptune. This individual proved to be the master of the coaster, and to him our captain again roared "Any news?" "Ay, ay; all alive up in the bay,' was the answer. The vessels were sweeping by each other with tantalizing rapidity, and without paying the customary deference to nautical etiquette, some six or seven of the passengers united in bawling out, as with one voice, "What news, what news?" The envious winds again bore away the answer, of which no more reached our ears than the same perplexing words of "Cadmus is in."

In the absence of all certainty, I ventured to ask Cadwallader, whether an important election had not just passed, in which some favourite namesake of the founder of Thebes had proved successful. This surmise, however, was not treated with any particular deference, and then we were left to devise our own manner of explaining the little we had heard, by the aid of sheer invention.

In the mean time the ship was pressing steadily towards her haven. The high land which, in contradistinction to the low, sandy beach, that extends four hundreds of leagues along the coast of this country, has obtained the name of "Neversink," ceased to rise, and objects had become distinct on its brown acclivity. A light-house on the Cape was soon plainly visible, and a large buoy was seen, heaving and setting with the unquiet waters, to mark the proper entrance to a wide bay, that stretched, farther than the eye could reach, to the westward. Just without this rolling beacon, lay a low, graceful, rakish, little schooner, in waiting to give us a pilot. The wind was getting light, and there was no necessity to arrest the progress of the ship to receive this welcome harbinger of the comforts of the land. It may be unnecessary to add, that we all pressed around him, in a body, to attain

the solution of our recent doubts, and to hear the tidings of another hemisphere.

I was struck with the singular air of exultation with which this sturdy marine guide delivered himself of the intelligence with which he was evidently teeming. To the usual question, he gave a quick answer, and in nearly the same language as the seaman of the fishing-smack. "Cadmus in," again rung in our ears without leaving us any wiser than before we had heard the inexplicable words. "She has been long enough from Havre, to be out again," retorted our captain, with a dryness that savoured a little of discontent. "If you think so much of the arrival of the Cadmus in thirty days, from France, what will you say to that of my ship, in twenty-one, from Liverpool?" "Your owners may be glad to see you, but then, you've not got the *old man* aboard." "We have them here of all ages: and, what is far better, some of both sexes!" returned one of the passengers, throwing a glance at the interested features of a beautiful young creature, who was eagerly listening to catch the syllables that should first impart intelligence from her native country. "Ay, ay; but you have no La Fayette in the ship." "La Fayette!" echoed, certainly every American within hearing. "Is La Fayette arrived?" demanded Cadwallader, with the quickness of lightning, and with an animation far greater than I had ever given him credit for possessing. "That is he, safe and well. He has been on the island with the vice-president since yesterday. This morning he is to go up to town, where he will find himself a welcome guest. The bay above is alive," our guide concluded, jerking his thumb over one shoulder, and looking as if he were master of a secret of some importance. Here, then, was a simple and brief explanation of the event on which we had been exercising our faculties for the last two hours.

For myself, I confess, I was disappointed, expecting little short of some revolution in the politics of the state. But the effect on most of my companions was as remarkable as it was sudden. Cadwallader did not speak again for many minutes. He walked apart; and I saw, by his elevated head and proud step, that the man was full of lofty and patriotic recollections. The eyes of the fair girl just mentioned, were glistening, and her pretty lip was actually quivering with emotion. A similar interest in the event was manifested, in a greater or less degree, by every individual in the ship, who claimed the land we were approaching as the country of his birth. The captain lost every shade of discontent on the instant, and even the native portion of the crew suspended their labour to listen to what was said, with a general air of gratification and pride.

I will acknowledge, Baron, that I was touched myself, at the common feeling thus betrayed by so many differently constituted individuals; and, at so simple an occurrence. There was none of that noisy acclamation with which the English seamen are apt to welcome any grateful intelligence, nor a single exaggerated exclamation, like those which characterize the manners of most of the continental nations of Europe, in their manifestations of pleasure.

It was not long ere Cadwallader had taken the pilot apart, and was earnestly engaged in extracting all the information he deemed necessary, on a subject he found so interesting. I was soon made acquainted with the result. It seems, that after an absence of forty years, La Fayette had returned to visit the land in which he had laid the foundation of his fame. That he had reached a country where hearts and arms would alike be open to receive him, was sufficiently manifest in the manner of all around me; and I could not but felicitate myself, in being so fortunate as to have arrived at a moment likely to elicit some

of the stronger emotions of a people, who are often accused of insensibility to all lively impressions, and most of whose thoughts, like their time, are said to be occupied in heedful considerations of the future. Here was, at least, an occasion to awaken recollections of the past, and to elicit something like a popular display of those generous qualities which constitute, what may not improperly be called, the chivalry of nations. It would be curious, also, to observe, how far political management was mingled, in a perfect democracy, with any demonstrations of pleasure it might be thought expedient to exhibit, or in what degree the true popular sentiment sympathized with feelings that, in one section of the earth, are, as you well know, not unfrequently played off by the engines of governmental power.

I was not sorry, therefore, to listen to the plans of my companion. A boat, in the employment of the journals of the city, was by this time alongside the ship, and having obtained the little news we had to impart, it was about to return into the haven, in order to anticipate the arrival of the vessel, which was likely to be delayed for many hours by a flat calm and an adverse tide. In this boat it was proposed that we should take passage, as far, at least, as the place where La Fayette had made his temporary abode. The earnestness with which Cadwallader pressed this plan, was not likely to meet with any objections from me. Tired of the ship, and eager to place my foot on the soil of the western world, the proposal was no sooner made than it was accepted. The boat was instantly engaged for our exclusive benefit, and the necessary preparations made for our departure.

And now a little incident occurred, which, as it manifests a marked difference in the manners, and perhaps in the characters of those who inhabit this republic, and the possessors of our own Europe, I shall take the liberty to introduce.

I have already mentioned a fair creature as being among our passengers. She is of that age when, in our eyes, the sex is most alluring, because we know it to be the most innocent. I do not think her years can much exceed seventeen. Happily, your Belgic temperament is too mercurial to require a tincture of romance to give interest to a simple picture, in which delicacy, feminine beauty, and the most commendable ingenuousness, were admirably mingled. Neither am I, albeit, past the time of day-dreams, and wakeful nights, so utterly insensible to the attractions of such a being, as to have passed three weeks in her society, without experiencing some portion of that manly interest in her welfare, which, I fear, it has been my evil fortune to have felt for too many of the syrens in general, to permit a sufficient concentration of the sentiment, in favour of any one in particular. I had certainly not forgotten, during the passage, to manifest a proper spirit of homage to the loveliness of the sex, in the person of this young American; nor do I think that my manner failed to express a prudent and saving degree of the admiration that was excited by her gentle, natural, and nymph-like deportment, no less than by her spirited and intelligent discourse. In short—but you were not born in Rotterdam, nor reared upon the Zuy der Zee, to need a madrigal on such a topic. The whole affair passed on the ocean, and, as a nautical man, you will not fail to comprehend it. Notwithstanding I had made every effort to appear, what you know I really am, sufficiently amiable, during the voyage, and, notwithstanding Cadwallader had not given himself any particular trouble on the subject at all, it was not to be denied that there was a marked distinction in the reception of our respective civilities, and that always in his favour. I confess that, for a long time, I was disposed (in the entire absence of all better reasons) to ascribe this preference to an illiberal national prejudice. Still, it

was only by comparison that I had the smallest rational grounds of complaint. But a peculiarly odious quality attaches itself to comparisons of this nature. There is a good deal of the Cæsar in my composition, as respects the sex; unless I could be first with the Houries, I believe I should be willing to abandon Paradise itself, in order to seek pre-eminence in some humbler sphere. I fear this ambitious temperament has been our bane, and has condemned us to the heartless and unsocial life we lead! Our fair fellow passenger was under the care of an aged and invalid grandfather, who had been passing a few years in Italy, in pursuit of health. Now, it is not easy to imagine a more cuttingly polite communication, than that which this vigilant old guardian permitted between me and his youthful charge. If I approached, her joyous, natural, and enticing (I will not, because a little piqued, deny the truth, Baron,) merriment was instantly changed into the cold and regulated smiles of artificial breeding. Nature seemed banished at my footstep: and yet it was the artlessness and irresistible attractions of those fascinations, which so peculiarly denote the influence of the mighty dame, that were constantly tempting me to obtrude my withering presence on her enjoyments. With Cadwallader, every thing was reversed. In his society, she laughed without ceasing; chatted, disputed, was natural and happy. To all this intercourse, the lynx-eyed grandfather paid not the smallest attention. He merely seemed pleased that his child had found an agreeable, and an instructive companion; while, on the contrary, there existed so much of attractiveness in our respective systems, that it was impossible for me to approach the person of the daughter, without producing a corresponding proximity on the part of the parent.

Something nettled by a circumstance that, to one who is sensible he is not as interesting as formerly,

really began to grow a little personal, I took occasion to joke Cadwallader on his superior happiness, and to felicitate myself on the probability, that I might yet enjoy the honour of officiating, in my character of a confirmed celibite, at his nuptials. He heard me without surprise, and answered me without emotion. "I thought the circumstance could not long escape one so quick-sighted," he said. "You think I am better received than yourself? The fact is indisputable; and, as the motive exists in customs that distinguish us, in a greater or less degree, from every other people, I will endeavour to account for it. In no other country, is the same freedom of intercourse between the unmarried of the two sexes, permitted, as in America. In no other Christian country, is there more restraint imposed on the communications between the married: in this particular, we reverse the usages of all other civilized nations. The why, and the wherefore, shall be pointed out to you, in proper time; but the present case requires its own explanation. Surprising, and possibly suspicious, as may seem to you the easy intercourse I hold with my young countrywoman, there is nothing in it beyond what you will see every day in our society. The father permits it, because *I am his countryman*, and he is watchful of you, because you are *not!* Men of my time of life, are not considered particularly dangerous to the affections of young ladies of seventeen, for unequal matches are of exceedingly rare occurrence among us. And, if I were what I have been," he added, smiling, "I do not know that the case would be materially altered. In every thing but years, the grandfather of the fair Isabel, knows that I am the equal of his charge. It would be quite in the ordinary course of things, that a marriage should grow out of this communication. Ninety-nine, in one hundred, of our family connexions, are formed very much in this manner. Taste and inclination, rather

guided, than controlled, by the prudence of older heads, form most of our matches; and just as much freedom as comports with that prudence, and a vast deal more than you probably deem safe, is allowed between the young of the two sexes. We, who ought to, and who do know best, think otherwise. Women are, literally, our better halves. Their frailty is to be ascribed to the seductions of man. In a community like ours, where almost every man has some healthful and absorbing occupation, there is neither leisure, nor inclination, to devote much time to unworthy pursuits. I need not tell you that vice must be familiar, before it ceases to be odious. In Europe, a successful intrigue often gives *éclat*, even to an otherwise contemptible individual; in America, he must be a peculiarly fortunate man, who can withstand its odium. But the abuse of youth and innocence with us, is comparatively rare indeed. In consequence, suspicion slumbers; *voila tout.*"

"But why this difference, then, between you and me?" I demanded. "Why does this Cerberus sleep only while you are nigh? I confess I looked for higher courtesy in a man who has travelled."

"It is precisely because *he has travelled*," my friend interrupted, a little dryly. "But you can console yourself with the expectation, that those of his countrymen, who have never quitted home, will be less vigilant, because less practised in foreign manners."

This introduction brings me to my incident. It was no sooner known that we were about to quit the ship, than a dozen longing faces gathered about us. Our example was followed by others, and one or two more boats from the land were engaged to transport the passengers into the bay, in order that they might witness the reception of La Fayette. I had observed a cloud of disappointment on the fair brow of the little Isabel, from the moment our intentions were known. The circumstance was mentioned

to Cadwallader, who was not slow to detect its reason. After a little thought, he approached the grandfather, and made an offer of as many seats, in our own boat, as might be necessary for the accommodation of his party. It seems the health of the old man would not permit the risk. The offer was, therefore, politely declined. The cloud thickened on the brow of Isabel; but it vanished entirely when her aged grandfather proposed that she should accompany us, attended by a maid, and *under the especial protection* of my companion. In all this arrangement, singular as it appeared to my eastern vision, there was the utmost simplicity and confidence. It was evident, by the tremulous and hesitating assent of the young lady, that even the customs of the country were slightly invaded; but, then, the occasion was deemed sufficiently extraordinary to justify the innovation. "So much for the privileges of two score and five," whispered Cadwallader, after he had handed his charge into the boat. For myself, I admit I rejoiced in an omen that was so flattering to those personal pretensions which, in my own case, are getting to be a little weakened by time. Before closing this relation, of what I consider a distinctive custom, it is proper to add, that had not the parties been of the very highest class of society, even far less hesitation would have been manifested; and that the little reluctance exhibited by Isabel, was rather a tribute paid to that retiring delicacy which is thought to be so proper to her sex, than to the most remote suspicion of any positive impropriety. Had she been a young married woman, there would, probably, have been the same little struggle with timidity, and the same triumph of the curiosity of the sex. But the interest which our fair companion took in the approaching ceremony, deserves a better name. It was plain, by her sparkling eyes and flushed features, that a more worthy senti-

ment was at the bottom of her impulses—it was almost patriotism.

Behold us then in the boat; Cadwallader, the gentle Isabel, and our three attendants, and impelled by the vigorous arms of four lusty watermen. We were still upon the open sea, and our distance from the city not less than seven leagues. The weather, however, was propitious, and our little bark, no less than its crew, was admirably adapted to inspire confidence. The former was long and narrow, but buoyant, and of beautiful construction, being both light and strong. The latter, it appears, are of a class of watermen, that are renowned in this country, under the name of Whitehallers. I have every reason to believe their reputation is fairly earned; for they urged the boat onward with great speed, and with the most extraordinary ease to themselves. I remarked, that their stroke was rather short, and somewhat quick, and that it was made entirely with the arm, the body remaining as nearly upright as possible when the limbs are exerted. At first, I thought these men were less civil than comported with their condition. They touched their hats to us, it is true, on entering the boat, but it was rather too much in the manner of a salutation of equality; at least, there was no very visible manifestation of a sense of inferiority. Closer observation, however, furnished no additional grounds of complaint. Their whole deportment was civil, nor, though far from humble, could it be termed in any degree obtrusive; still it was not precisely European. There seemed no sin of commission, but something of omission, that was offensive to the established superiority of a man of a certain number of quarterings. Perhaps I was more alive to this jealous feeling, from knowing that I was in a republican country, and from the fact, that I had so recently quitted one where the lower classes bow more, and the higher less, than among any other Christian people.

The strokesman of the boat took some interest in seeing us all properly bestowed. With the utmost coolness he appropriated the best place to Isabel, and then with the same *sang froid* intimated that her attendant should occupy the next. Neither was he ignorant that the object of his care was a domestic, for he called her "the young woman," while he distinguished her mistress as "the young lady." I was a little surprised to see that Cadwallader quietly conceded the place to this Abigail; for, during the pas sage, the distinctions of master and servant always had been sufficiently observed between all our passengers. I even ventured to speak to him on the subject, in German, of which he has a tolerable knowledge. "Notwithstanding all that the old world has said of itself on this subject," he coolly answered, "you are now in the true Paradise of women. They receive, perhaps, less idolatry, but more manly care here, than in any country I have visited." Truly, Baron, I begin to deem the omens propitious!

After passing at a short distance from the low sandy point already named, we were fairly within the estuary. This bay is of considerable extent, and is bounded on the north and on the south by land of some elevation. It receives a river or two from the west, and is partially protected from the ocean, on the east, by a low beach, which terminates in the point named, and by an island on the opposite side of the entrance. The mouth is a few miles in width, possessing several shallow channels, but only one of a depth sufficient to admit vessels of a heavy draught. The latter are obliged to pass within musket-shot of the point, Cape, or *Hook*, as it is here called. Thence to the city, a distance of some six leagues, the navigation is so intricate as to render a pilot indispensable.

The ruins of an imperfect and insignificant military work were visible on the cape; but I was told the government is seriously occupied in erecting more

formidable fortifications, some of which were shortly visible. A shoal was pointed out, on which it is contemplated to construct an immense castle, at a vast expense, and which, with the other forts built and building, will make the place impregnable against all marine attacks. I have been thus diffuse in my details, dear Baron, because I believe every traveller has a prescriptive right to prove that he enters all strange lands with his eyes open; and, because it is quite out of my power to say at what moment your royal master, the good king William, may see fit to send you at the head of a fleet to regain those possessions, of which his ancestors, of the olden time, were ruthlessly robbed by the cupidity of the piratical English!

I presume, that renowned navigator, the indefatigable Hudson, laboured under some such delusion as myself, when his adventurous bark first steered within the capes of this estuary. My eyes were constantly bent towards the west, in expectation of seeing the spires of a town, rearing themselves from the water which still bounded the view in that direction. The boat, however, held its course towards the north, though nothing was visible there, but an unbroken outline of undulating hills. It seems we were only in an outer harbour, on a magnificent scale, which takes its name (Raritan Bay) from that of the principal river it receives from the west. A passage through the northern range of hills, became visible as we approached them, and then glimpses of the cheerful and smiling scene within were first caught. This passage, though near a mile in width, is a strait, compared with the bays within and without, and it is not improperly termed "the Narrows." Directly in the mouth of this passage, and a little on its eastern side, arises a large massive fortress, in stone, washed by the water on all its sides, and mounting some sixty or sev enty pieces of heavy ordnance. The heights on the ad-

joining shores, are also crowned with works, though of a less imposing aspect. The latter are the remains of the temporary defences of the late war, while the former constitutes part of the great plan of permanent defence. Labourers are, however, unceasingly employed on the new forts.

The shores, on both hands, were now dotted with marine villas and farm-houses, and the view was alive with all the pleasing objects of civilized life. On our left, a little distance above the passage, a group of houses came into view, and some fifty sail were seen anchored in the offing. "That, then, is New-York!" I said, with a feeling a little allied to disappointment. My companion was silent, for his thoughts kept him dumb, if not deaf. "Gentlemen are apt to think they get into the heart of America at the first step," very coolly returned our strokesman; "we are eight good miles from Whitehall slip, and that village is the quarantine ground." This was said without any visible disrespect, but with an air of self-possession that proved our Whitehaller thought it a subject on which long experience had given him a perfect right to bestow an opinion. As I felt in no haste to take the second step into a country where the first had proved so unreasonably long, I was fain to await the developement of things, with patience. My companions did not manifest any disposition to converse. Even the petite Isabel, though her strong native attachments had been sufficiently apparent, by her previous discourse, was no longer heard. Like our male companion, a sentiment of deep interest in the ensuing scene, kept her silent. At length the exclamation of "there they come!" burst from the lips of Cadwallader; and there they did come, of a certainty, in all the majesty of a fine aquatic procession, and that too on a scale of magnificence that was admirably suited to the surrounding waters, and as an American would also probably say, "to the occasion." In order that

you may form a better idea of the particular scene, it is necessary that I should attempt a description of some of its parts.

The harbour of New-York is formed by a junction of the Hudson with an arm of the sea. The latter connects the waters of Raritan Bay with those of a large sound, which commences a few leagues further eastward, and which separates, for more than a hundred miles, the state of Connecticut from the long narrow island of Nassau. The Americans call this district Long Island, in common parlance; but I love to continue those names which perpetuate the recollection of your former dominion. Some six or seven rivers unite here to pour their waters into a vast basin, of perhaps sixty or seventy miles in circuit. This basin is subdivided into two unequal parts by a second island, which is known by the name of Staten, another memento of your ancient power. The Narrows is the connecting passage. The inner bay cannot be less than twenty miles in circumference. It contains three or four small islands, and possesses water enough for all the purposes of navigation, with good anchorage in almost every part. The land around it is low, with the exception of the hills near its entrance, and certain rocky precipices of a very striking elevation that on one side line the Hudson, for some miles, commencing a short distance from its mouth.

On the present occasion every thing combined to lend to a scenery, that is sufficiently pleasing of itself, its best and fullest effect. The heavens were without a cloud; the expanse beneath, supporting such an arch as would do no discredit to the climate of sunny Italy herself. The bay stretched as far as eye could reach, like a mirror, unruffled and shining. The heat was rather genial than excessive, and, in fine, as our imaginative young companion poetically expressed it, "the very airs were loyal, nor had the climate forgotten to be true to the feelings of the hour!"

It is necessary to have seen something of the ordinarily subdued and quiet manner of these people, in order to enter fully into a just appreciation of the common feeling, which certainly influenced all who were with me in the boat. You probably know that we in Europe are apt to charge the Americans with being cold of temperament, and little sensible of lively impressions of any sort. I have learnt enough to know, that in return, they charge us, in gross, with living in a constant state of exaggeration, and with affecting sentiments we do not feel. I fear the truth will be found as much with them as against them. It is always hazardous to judge of the heart by what the mouth utters: nor is he any more likely to arrive at the truth, who believes that every time an European shows his teeth in a smile, he will do you no harm, than he is right who thinks the dog that growls will as infallibly bite. I believe, after all, it must be conceded, that sophistication is not the most favourable science possible for the cultivation of the passions. No man is, in common, more imperturbable than the American savage; and who is there more terrible in his anger, or more firm in his attachments? Let this be as it may, these republicans certainly exhibit their ordinary emotions in no very dramatic manner. I had never before seen Cadwallader so much excited, and yet his countenance manifested thought, rather than joy. Determined to probe him a little closer, I ventured to inquire into the nature of those ties which united La Fayette, a foreigner, and a native of a country that possesses so little in manners and opinions in common with his own, to a people so very differently constituted from those among whom he was born and educated.

"It is then fortunate for mankind," returned Cadwallader, "that there exist, in nature, principles which can remove these obstacles of our own creation. Though habit and education do place wide and fre-

quently lamentable barriers between the sympathies of nations, he who has had the address to break through them, without a sacrifice of any natural duty, possesses a merit, which, as it places him above the level of his fellow-creatures, should, and will protect him from their prejudices. It is no small part of the glory of La Fayette, that while he has taken such a hold of our affections as no man probably ever before possessed in those of a foreign nation, he has never, for an instant, forgotten that he was a Frenchman. In order, however, to appreciate the strength and the reasons of this attachment, as well as the glory it should reflect on its subject, it is necessary to remember the causes which first brought our present guest among us.

"If any man may claim a character for manful and undeviating adherence to what he has deemed the right, under circumstances of nearly irresistible temptation to go wrong, it is La Fayette. His love of liberal principles was even conceived under the most unfavourable circumstances. The blandishments of a sensual, but alluring court, the prejudices of a highly privileged caste, with youth, wealth, and constitution, were not auspicious to the discovery of truth. None but a man who was impelled by high and generous intentions, could have thrown away a load which weighs so many gifted minds to the earth. He has the high merit of being the first French nobleman who was willing to devote his life and fortune to the benefit of the inferior classes. Some vapid and self-sufficient commentators have chosen to term this impulse an inordinate and vain ambition. If their appellation be just, it has been an ambition which has ever proved itself singularly regardful of others, and as singularly regardless of self. In the same spirit of detraction have these declaimers attempted to assail the virtue they could not imitate, and to depreciate services, whose very object their contracted minds

have not the power to comprehend. I shall not speak of events connected with the revolution in his own country, for they form no other part of our admiration of La Fayette, than as they serve to show us how true and how fearless he has ever been in adhering to what we, in common, believe to be the right. Had he been fitted to control that revolution, as it existed in its worst and most revolting aspects, he would hav failed in some of those qualities which are necessary to our esteem.

"In the remembrance of the connexion between La Fayette and his own country, the American finds the purest gratification. It is not enough to say that other men have devoted themselves to the cause of human nature, since we seek, in vain, for one who has done it with so little prospect of future gain, or at so great hazard of present loss. His detracters pretend that he was led into our quarrel by that longing for notoriety, which is so common to youth. It is worthy of remark, that this longing should have been as peculiarly his own by its commencement as by its duration. It is exhibited in the man of seventy, under precisely the same forms that it was first seen in the youth of nineteen. In this particular, at least, it partakes of the immutable quality of truth.

"Separate from all those common principles, which, in themselves, would unite us to any man, there are ties of a peculiarly endearing nature between us and La Fayette. His devotion to our cause was not only first in point of time, but it has ever been first in all its moral features. He came to bestow, and not to receive. While others, who brought little beside their names, were seeking rank and emoluments, he sought the field of battle. His first commission had scarcely received the stamp of official forms, before it had received the still more honourable seal of his own blood. A boy in years, a native of a country towards which we had a hereditary dislike, he caused

his prudence to be respected among the most prudent and wary people of the earth. He taught us to forget our prejudices: we not only loved him, but we began to love his nation for his sake. Throughout the half century of our intercourse, a period more fraught with eventful changes than any that has preceded it, nothing has occurred to diminish, or to disturb, this affection. As his devotion to our cause never wavered, not even in the darkest days of our adversity, so has our attachment continued steady to the everlasting obligations of gratitude. Whatever occurred in the revolutions of the old world, the eye of America was turned on La Fayette. She watched his movements with all the solicitude of a tender parent; triumphed in his successes; sympathized in his reverses; mourned in his sufferings, but always exulted in his constancy. The knowledge of passing events is extended, in our country, to a degree that is elsewhere unknown. We heard of the downfall of thrones; of changes in dynasties; of victories, defeats, rapine, and war, until curiosity itself was sated with repetitions of the same ruthless events. Secure in our position, and firm in our principles, the political tornadoes, that overturned the most ancient establishments of the old world, sounded in our ears, with no greater effect than the sighings of our own autumnal gales. But no event, coupled with the interests of our friend, was suffered to escape our notice. The statesman, the yeoman, or the school-boy; the matron among her offspring; the housewife amid her avocations; and the beauty in the blaze of her triumph, forgot alike the passions or interests of the moment, forgot their apathy in the distresses of a portion of the world that they believed was wanting in some of its duty to itself, to suffer at all, and drew near to listen at the name of La Fayette. I remember the deep, reverential, I might almost say awful, attention, with which a school of some sixty children, on a remote

frontier, listened to the tale of his sufferings in the castle of Olmutz, as it was recounted to us by the instructor, who had been a soldier in his youth, and fought the battles of his country, under the orders of the 'young and gallant Frenchman.' We plotted among ourselves, the means of his deliverance; wondered that the nation was not in arms to redress his wrongs, and were animated by a sort of reflection of his own youthful and generous chivalry. Washington was then with us, and, as he was said to be exerting the influence of his powerful name, which, even at that early day, was beginning to obtain the high ascendancy of acknowledged virtue, we consoled ourselves with the reflection, that he, at least, could never fail. Few Americans, at this hour, enjoy a happier celebrity than Huger, who, in conjunction with a brave German, risked life and liberty to effect the release of our benefactor.

"Though subsequent events have tranquillized this interest in the fortunes of La Fayette, we must become recreant to our principles, before it can become extinct. It is now forty years since he was last among us; but scarcely an American can enter France without paying the homage of a visit to La Grange. Our admiration of his disinterestedness, of his sacrifices, and of his consistency, is just as strong as ever; and, I confess, I anticipate that the country will receive him in such a manner as shall prove this attachment to the world. But, you are not to expect, in our people, manifestations of joy similar to those you have witnessed in Europe. We are neither clamorous nor exaggerated, in the exhibitions of our feelings. The prevailing character of the nation is that of moderation. Still am I persuaded that, in the case of La Fayette, some of our self-restraint will give way before the force of affection. We consider ourselves as the guardians of his fame. They who live a century hence, may live to know how high a superstructure

of renown can be reared, when it is based on the broad foundations of the gratitude of a people like our own. The decision of common sense to-day, will become the decision of posterity."

Cadwallader spoke with an earnestness that, at least, attested the sincerity of his own feelings. I may have given to his language the stiffness of a written essay, but I am certain of having preserved all the ideas, and even most of the words. The humid eyes of the fair Isabel responded to all he uttered, and even our Whitehallers bent to their oars, and listened with charmed ears.—Adieu.

TO THE BARON VON KEMPERFELT,

&c. &c.

New-York, ———

I CLOSED my last with the sentiments of my American friend, on the subject of La Fayette. I confess that the time was, when my feelings had not entirely escaped the prejudice which is so common among certain people in Europe, on the subject of the character of this distinguished individual. The French Revolution led to so many excesses, that, under a disgust of its abuses, the world has been a little too apt to confound persons, in judging of its characters and events. It is now time, however, to begin to consider, whether its sacrifices have been made without a sufficient object. If the consciousness of civil rights, and the general intelligence which are beginning to diffuse themselves throughout Christendom, are remembered, it will be generally admitted, I believe, that France has not suffered in vain. It

any man can be said to have foreseen, and to have hoped for these very results, on which the kingdom, no less than the enlightened of all Europe, is beginning to felicitate itself, it really seems to me, it must be La Fayette. That he failed to stem the torrent of disorder, was the fault of the times, or, perhaps, the fault of those whose previous abuses had produced so terrible a re-action. It was fortunate for Napoleon himself, that his destinies did not call him into the arena an hour sooner than they did. His life, or his proscription, would, otherwise, have probably been the consequence. The man who was so easily spoiled by prosperity, might readily have sunk under the extraordinary pressure of the first days of the Revolution. But, as it is my present object to write of America, we will waive all other matter.

Had any of those ancient prejudices still existed, I should have been churlish, indeed, not to have participated, in some degree, in the generous feelings of my companions. There was so much genuine, undisguised, and disinterested gratification expressed in the manners of them all, that it was impossible to distrust its sincerity. The welcome of every eye was more like the look with which friend meets friend, than the ordinary conventional and artificial greetings of communities. Not a soul of them all, with the exception of Cadwallader, had ever seen their visiter, and yet the meanest individual of the party took a manifest pleasure in his visit. But it is time that I should show you that this feeling was not confined to the half-dozen who were in my own boat,

At the exclamation of "there they come," from Cadwallader, my look had been directed to the inner bay, and in the direction of the still distant city. The aquatic procession I saw, was composed principally of steam-boats. They were steering towards the village of the Lazaretto, and their decks exhibited solid masses of human heads. In order to conceive the

beauty of the sight, you are to recall the accessories described in my last letter, the loveliness of the day, and it is also necessary to understand something of the magnitude, appearance, and beauty of an American steam-boat. The latter are often nearly as large as frigates, are not painted, as commonly in Europe, a gloomy black, but are of lively and pleasing colours, without being gaudy, and have frequently species of wooden canopies, that serve as additional decks, on which their passengers may walk. The largest of these boats, when crowded, will contain a thousand people. There was one, among the present collection, of great size, that had been constructed to navigate the ocean, and which was provided with the usual masts and rigging of a ship. This vessel was manned by seamen of the public service, and was gaily decorated with a profusion of flags. Our boat reached the wharf of the Lazaretto, a few minutes after the procession. One of the largest of the vessels had stopped at this place, lying with her side to the shore, while the others were whirling and sailing around the spot, giving an air of peculiar life and animation to the scene. Here I found myself, as it were by a *coup de main*, transferred at once from the monotony of a passage ship, into the bustle and activity of the American world. Probably not less than five thousand people were collected at this one spot, including all ages and every condition known to the society of the country. Though the whole seemed animated by a common sentiment of pleasure, I did not fail to observe an air of great and subdued sobriety in the countenances of almost all around me. As Cadwallader had the address to obtain our admission into the steam-boat that had come to land, and which was intended to receive La Fayette in person, I was brought into immediate contact with its occupants. Closer observation confirmed my more distant impressions. I found myself in the midst of an orderly, grave, well

dressed, but certainly exulting crowd. It was plain to see that all orders of men (with a few females) were here assembled, unless I might except that very inferior class which I already begin to think is not as usual to be found in this country as in most others. I heard French spoken, and by the quick, restless eyes, and elevated heads, of some half-dozen, I could see that France had her representatives in the throng and that they deemed the occasion one in which they had no reason to blush for their country. Indeed I can scarcely imagine a spectacle more gratifying to a Frenchman, than the sight that was here exhibited. The multitude was assembled to do honour to an individual of their own country, for services that he had rendered to a whole people. The homage he received was not of a nature to be distrusted. It was as spontaneous as had been the benefits it was intended in some manner to requite; it was of a nature, both in its cause and its effects, to do credit to the best feelings of man; but it was also of a nature to contribute to the just and personal pride of the countrymen of him who was its object.

We had no sooner secured a proper situation for the little Isabel, than I disposed myself to make remarks still more minute on the assemblage. Cadwallader kept near me, and, though big with the feelings of home and country, his ear was not deaf to my inquiries and demands for explanation. The first question was to ascertain the present residence of the "General," as I found he was universally called, as it were *par excellence*. They pointed out a modest dwelling, embowered in trees, which might claim to be something between an unpretending villa and a large farm-house. It was the residence of the Vice-President of the United States. This individual was born in a condition of mediocrity,—had received the ordinary, imperfect, classical education of the country, and had risen, by popular favour, to the station

of Governor of this, his native, state. Quite as much by the importance of that state, as by the weight of his own character, (which is very differently estimated by different people,) he has been chosen to fill his present situation; an office which, while it certainly makes him the legal successor of the President, in case of death, resignation, or disability, is not considered, in itself, one of very high importance, since its sole duties are limited to the chair of the Senate, without a seat in the cabinet. There has been no recent instance of a Vice-President succeeding to the Presidency; and I can easily see, the office is deemed, among politicians, what the English seamen call a "yellow flag." The present incumbent is said to be reduced in his private resources, (the fate of most public men, here as elsewhere, where corruption is not exceedingly barefaced,) and is compelled to make the dwelling named his principal, if not his only, residence. Here La Fayette had passed the day after his arrival, the sabbath, which it would seem is never devoted by the Americans to any public ceremonies except those of religion.

Cadwallader pointed out to me, among the crowd, several individuals who had filled respectable military rank in the war of the Revolution. Three or four of them were men of fine presence, and of great gravity and dignity of mien: others had less pretension; but all appeared to possess, at that moment, a common feeling. There was one in particular, who appeared an object of so much attention and respect, that I was induced to inquire his history. He had been an officer of a rank no higher than colonel—(few of the generals of that period are now living;)—but it seems he had obtained a name among his countrymen for political firmness and great personal daring. He, however, appeared a good deal indebted for his present distinction to his great age, which could not be much less than ninety. Cadwallader

then pointed to a still firm, upright veteran of near eighty, who had left the army of the Revolution a general, and who had already travelled forty miles that morning to welcome La Fayette. Others in the crowd were more or less worthy of attention; but the principal object of interest soon made his appearance, and drew all eyes to himself.

The General approached the boat escorted by a committee of the city authorities, and attended by the Vice-President. The latter, a man of rather pleasing exterior, took leave of him on the wharf. La Fayette entered the vessel amid a deep and respectful silence. A similar reception of a public man, in Europe, would have been ominous of a waning popularity. Not an exclamation, not even a greeting of any sort, was audible. A lane was opened through a mass of bodies that was nearly solid, and the visiter advanced slowly along the deck towards the stern. The expression of his countenance, though gratified and affectionate, seemed bewildered. His eye, remarkable for its fire, even in the decline of life, appeared to seek in vain the features of his ancient friends. To most of those whom he passed, his form must have worn the air of some image drawn from the pages of history. Half a century had carried nearly all of his contemporary actors of the Revolution into the great abyss of time, and he now stood like an imposing column that had been reared to commemorate deeds and principles that a whole people had been taught to reverence.

La Fayette moved slowly through the multitude, walking with a little difficulty from a personal infirmity. On every side of him his anxious gaze still sought some remembered face; but, though all bowed, and, with a deep sentiment of respect and affection, each seemed to watch his laboured footstep, no one advanced to greet him. The crowd opened in his front by a sort of secret impulse, until he had gained the extremity of the boat, where, last in the throng, stood

the greyheaded and tottering veteran I have men tioned. By common consent his countrymen had paid this tribute to his services and his age. The honour of receiving the first embrace was his. I should fail in power were I to attempt a description equal to the effect produced by this scene. The old man extended his arms, and, as La Fayette heard his name, he flew into them like one who was glad to seek any relief from the feelings by which he was oppressed. They were long silently folded in each other's arms. I know not, nor do I care, whether there were any present more stoical than myself: to me, this sight, simple and devoid of pageantry, was touching and grand. Its very nakedness heightened the effect. There was no laboured address, no ready answer, no drilling of the feelings in looks or speeches, nor any mercenary cries to drown the senses in noise. Nature was trusted to, and well did she perform her part. I saw all around me paying a silent tribute to her power. I do not envy the man who could have witnessed such a scene unmoved.

Greetings now succeeded greetings, until not only all the aged warriors, but most of the individuals in the boat, had been permitted to welcome their guest. In the meanwhile the vessel had left the land, unheeded, and, by the time recollection had returned, I found myself in an entirely new situation. The whole of the aquatic procession was in motion towards the town, and a gayer or a more animated *cortège* can scarcely be imagined. The deep, quiet sentiment which attended the first reception, had found relief, and joy was exhibiting itself under some of its more ordinary aspects. The Castle of La Fayette (for so is the fortress in the midst of the water called) was sending the thunder of its heavy artillery in our wake; while several light vessels of war (the steam-ship included) were answering it in feeble, but not less hearty, echoes. The yards of the latter were strung with

seamen, and occasionally she swept grandly along our side, rending the air with the welcome peculiar to your element. There was literally a maze of steamboats. Our own, as containing the object of the common interest, was permitted to keep steadily on her way, quickening or relaxing her speed, to accommodate her motion to that of those in company, but scarce a minute passed that some one of this brilliant *cortège* was not sweeping along one or the other of our sides, bearing a living burthen, which, as it was animated by one spirit, seemed to possess but one eye, and one subject to gaze at. It was some little time before I could sufficiently extricate my thoughts from the pleasing confusion of such a spectacle, to examine the appearance of the bay, and of the town, which soon became distinctly visible. Though the distance exceeded two leagues, our passage seemingly occupied but a very few minutes. Before us the boats began to thicken on the water, though the calmness of the day, and the speed with which we moved, probably prevented our being followed by an immense train of lighter craft. Two of the steam-vessels, however, had taken the Cadmus in tow, and were bearing her in triumph towards the city. I had almost forgotten to say, that in passing this ship, which had been anchored off the Lazaretto, the son and secretary of La Fayette joined us, and received the sort of reception you can readily imagine. We then passed a few fortified islands, which spoke to us in their artillery, and soon found ourselves within musket-shot of the town.

At the confluence of the Hudson (which is here a mile in width) and the arm of the sea already mentioned, the city is narrowed nearly to a point. The natural formation of the land, however, has been changed to a fine sweep, which is walled against the breaches of the water, while trees have been planted, and walks have been laid out, on the open space

which lies between the houses and the bay. This promenade was once occupied by the principal fortification of the colonial town, from which circumstance it has obtained the name of the "Battery." On a small, artificial island, at the more immediate junction of the two tides, stands a large circular work, of one tier of guns, which was once known as "Castle Clinton." I has been abandoned, however, as a military post, and having become the property of the city, it is now occupied as a place of refreshment and amusement for the inhabitants, under the mongrel appellation of "Castle Garden." There is no garden, unless the area of the work can be called one; but it seems that as the city abounds with small public gardens, which are appropriated to the same uses as this rejected castle, it has been thought proper, in this instance, to supply the space which is elsewhere found so agreeable, by a name at least. This place had been chosen for the spot at which La Fayette was to land. The ramparts of the castle, which have been altered to a noble belvidere, a terrace at the base of the work, and the whole of the fine sweep of the battery, a distance of more than a quarter of a mile, were teeming with human countenances. A long glittering line of the military was visible in the midst of the multitude, and every thing denoted an intention to give the visiter a noble welcome. The reception I had already witnessed was evidently only a prelude to a still more imposing spectacle; the whole population of the place having poured out to this spot, and standing in readiness to greet their guest. To my eye, there seemed, at least, a hundred thousand souls. Our approach to the shore was now positively impeded by the boats, and La Fayette left us in a barge, which was sent to receive him from the land. What passed about his person, in the following scene, I am unable to say; but I saw the rocking of the multitude as he moved among them, and heard the shouts which, from time

to time, escaped a people whose manners are habitually so self-restrained. It was easy to note his movements in the distance, for, wherever he appeared, thither the tide of human beings set; but oppressed with the novelty of my situation, and anxious to liberate my thoughts from the whirl of so constant an excitement, I was glad to hear Cadwallader propose our seeking a hotel. We left the little Isabel at the door of her father; and after being present at a meeting between a nation and its guest, I had the pleasure to see the fair girl throw herself, weeping, but happy, into the arms of those who formed her domestic world. Still, ingenuous and affectionate as this young creature is, she scarcely appeared to think of home, until her foot was on the threshold of her father's house. Then, indeed, La Fayette was for a time forgotten, and nature was awakened in all its best and sweetest sympathies. Our peculiar propensities, my worthy Baron, may have left us with lighter loads to journey through the vale of life; but I hope it is no treason to the principles of the club, sometimes to entertain a moderate degree of doubt on the score of their wisdom.

Our lodgings are at a house that is called the City Hotel. It is a tavern on a grand scale, possessing the double character of an European and an American house. We have taken up our abode in the former side, the latter, in the true meaning of the word, being a little too gregarious, for the humour of even my companion. In order that you may understand this distinction, it is necessary that I should explain. I shall do it on the authority of Cadwallader.

Most of the travelling in America is done either in steam-boats, which abound, or in the public coaches. This custom has induced the habit of living in common, which prevails, in a greater or less degree, from one extremity of the Republic, or, as it is called here, "the Union," to the other. Those, however, who

choose to live separately, can do so, by incurring a small additional charge. In this house, the number of inmates must, at this moment, greatly exceed a hundred. By far the greater part occupy nothing more than bed-rooms, assembling at stated hours at a *table d' hôte* for their meals, of which there are four in the day. In some few instances more than one bed is in a room, but it is not the usual arrangement of the house; the whole of which I have visited, from its garrets to its kitchens. I find the building extensive; quite equal to a first-rate European hotel in size, excelling the latter in some conveniences, and inferior to it in others. It is clean from top to bottom; carpeted in almost every room; a custom the Americans have borrowed from the English, and which, in this latitude, in the month of August, might be changed for something more comfortable. Our own accommodations are excellent. They comprise our bed-rooms, which are lofty, airy, and convenient, and a *salon*, that would be esteemed handsome even in Paris. We also might have our four meals, and at our own hours: dining, however, at six o'clock, we dispense with the supper. The master of the house is a respectable, and an exceedingly well-behaved and obliging man, who, of course, allows each of his guests, except those who voluntarily choose to live at his *table d' hôte*, to adopt his own hours, without a murmur, or even a discontented look. I believe we might dine at midnight, if we would, without exciting his surprise. Cadwallader tells me the customs, in this respect, vary exceedingly in America; that dinner is eaten between the hours of two and six, by people in genteel life, though rarely later than the latter hour, and not often so late. The *table d' hôte* in this house is served at three.

The charges are far from dear, where we are established, though it is one of the most expensive taverns in the country. The price for the rooms

sounded a little high at first; but when we took into view the style of the accommodation, the excessive abundance, as well as the quality of our food, and the liberality with which lights, &c. &c., were furnished, we found them much lower than what the same articles could be got for in Paris, and vastly lower than in London, or even in Liverpool. But of all these things I intend to give some one of you (I think it must be the colonel, who unites, to so remarkable a degree, the love of his art with the love of good cheer) a more detailed account at some future day.

I had almost forgotten to say, that La Fayette is lodged in the same house with ourselves. He is literally overwhelmed with kindness and honours. Pleasing as we find the circumstance in itself, I fear it will oblige us to seek a different abode, since there is a throng incessantly at the door; well dressed and orderly, it is true, but still a throng. The very boys are eager to shake his hand, and thousands of bright eyes are turned towards the windows of our hotel to catch fleeting glimpses of his person. His stay here is, however, limited to a short period, an old engagement calling him to Boston, which, during the war of the Revolution, was a place of more importance than even this great commercial town. Adieu.

TO SIR EDWARD WALLER, BART

&c. &c.

New-York,——

*In consequence of this temporary separation from Cadwallader, I was left for a few days the master of my own movements. I determined to employ them in a rapid excursion through a part of the eastern states of this great confederation, in order to obtain a *coup d'œil* of a portion of the interior. It would have been the most obvious, and perhaps the most pleasing route, to have followed the coast as far as Boston: but this would have brought me in the train of La Fayette, where the natural aspect of society was disturbed by the universal joy and excitement produced by his reception. I chose, therefore, a direction farther from the water, through the centre of Connecticut, entering Massachusetts by its southern border, and traversing that state to Vermont. After looking a little at the latter, and New-Hampshire, I returned through the heart of Massachusetts to Rhode Island, re-entering and quitting Connecticut at new points, and regaining this city through the adjacent county of Westchester. The whole excursion has exceeded a thousand miles, though the distance from New-York has at no time been equal to three hundred. By naming some of the principal towns through which I passed, you will be able to trace the route on a map, and may better understand the little I have to communicate. I entered Connecticut near Danbury, and left it at Suffield, having passed a night in Hartford,

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* The commencement of this, and of many of the succeeding letters, are omitted, since they contain matter already known to the reader.

one of its two capital towns. The river was followed in crossing Massachusetts, and my journey in Vermont terminated at Windsor. I then crossed the Connecticut (river) into New-Hampshire, to Concord, and turning south, re-entered Massachusetts, proceeding to Worcester. The journey from this point back to New-York was a little circuitous, embracing Providence and Newport, in Rhode Island, and New-London, New-Haven and Fairfield, in Connecticut.

As experience had long since shown me that the people on all great, and much frequented, roads, acquire a species of conventional and artificial character, I determined, if possible, to penetrate at once into that part of the country within my reach, which might be supposed to be the least sophisticated, and which, of course, would afford the truest specimen of the national character. Cadwallader has examined my track, and he tells me I have visited the very portion of New-England, which is the best adapted to such an object. I saw no great town during my absence, and if I travelled much of the time amid secluded and peaceful husbandmen, I occasionally touched at points where all was alive with the bustle and activity of commerce and manufactures.

A review of the impressions left by this short excursion has convinced me of the difficulty of conveying to an European, by the pen, any accurate, general impression, of even the external appearance of this country. What is so true of one part, is so false of the others, and descriptions of sensible things which were exact a short time since, become so very soon erroneous through changes, that one should hesitate to assume the responsibility of making them. Still, such as they are, mine are at your service. In order, however, to estimate their value, some little preliminary explanation may be necessary.

The six eastern states of this union comprise what is called New-England. Their inhabitants are known

here by the familiar name of 'Yankees.' This word is most commonly supposed to be a corruption of 'Yengeese,' the manner in which the native tribes, first known to the colonists, pronounced 'English.' Some, however, deny this derivation, at the same time that they confess their inability to produce a plausible substitute. It is a little singular that the origin of a soubriquet, which is in such general use, and which cannot be of any very long existence, should already be a matter of doubt. It is said to have been used by the English as a term of contempt, when the American was a colonist, and it is also said, that the latter often adopts it as an indirect and playful means of retaliation. It is necessary to remember one material distinction in its use, which is infallibly made by every American. At home, the native of even New-York, though of English origin, will tell you he is not a Yankee. The term here, is supposed to be perfectly provincial in its application; being, as I have said, confined to the inhabitants, or rather the natives, of New-England. But, out of the United States, even the Georgian does not hesitate to call himself a 'Yankee.' The Americans are particularly fond of distinguishing any thing connected with their general enterprise, skill, or reputation, by this term. Thus, the southern planter, who is probably more averse than any other to admit a community of those personal qualities, which are thought to mark the differences in provincial or rather state character, will talk of what a 'Yankee merchant,' a 'Yankee negotiator,' or a 'Yankee soldier,' can and has done; meaning always the people of the United States. I have heard a naval officer of rank, who was born south of the Potomac, and whose vessel has just been constructed in this port, speak of the latter with a sort of suppressed pride, as a 'Yankee man-of-war.' Now, I had overheard the same individual allude to another in a manner that appeared reproachful, and in which he used the word 'Yankee,' with peculiar

emphasis. Thus it is apparent, that the term has two significations among the Americans themselves, one of which may be called its national, and the other its local meaning. The New-Englandman evidently exults in the appellation at all times. Those of the other states with whom I have come in contact, are manifestly quite as well pleased to lay no claim to the title, though all use it freely, in its foreign, or national sense. I think it would result from these facts, that the people of New-England are thought, by the rest of their countrymen, to possess some minor points of character, in which the latter do not care to participate, and of which the New-Englandman is unconscious, or in which, perhaps, he deems himself fortunate, while, on the other hand, they possess certain other and more important qualities, which are admitted to be creditable to the whole nation. Cadwallader, who is a native of New-York, smiled when I proposed this theory, but desired me to have a little patience until I had been able to judge for myself. After all, there is little or no feeling excited on the subject. The inhabitants of states, living a thousand miles asunder, speak of each other with more kindness, in common, than the inhabitants of adjoining counties in England, or provinces in France. Indeed, the candour and manliness with which the northern man generally admits the acknowledged superiority of his southern countrymen, on certain points, and *vice versa*, is matter of surprise to me, who, as you know, have witnessed so much illiberality on similar subjects, among the natives of half the countries of Europe.

New-England embraces an area of between sixty and seventy thousand square miles. Thus, you see, it is larger in extent than England and Wales united. It has about seven hundred miles of sea-coast, and contains a population of something less than 1,800,000. This would give about twenty-seven to the square

mile. But in order to arrive at an accurate idea of the populousness of the inhabited parts of the country, it is necessary to exclude from the calculation, that part of it which is not peopled. We should then reject a very large portion of Maine, and a good deal of land in the northern parts of Vermont and New-Hampshire, including, perhaps, twenty thousand square miles. This estimate would leave forty inhabitants to the square mile. But we will confine ourselves to Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island; neither of which, for America, has an unusual quantity of vacant land. Their surface embraces about 14,000 square miles. The population is not quite a million. This will give an average of a little less than seventy to the square mile. Here, then, we have what may be considered the maximum of the density of American population on any very extended surface. There is a fair proportion of town and country, and a more equal distribution of the labour of society, between commerce, manufactures, and agriculture, than perhaps in any other section of the Union. You are not, however, to suppose that this amount of population is confined to these three states. A great deal of New-York, Ohio, and Pennsylvania, and certain districts in many other states, have attained, or even exceed, this ratio. Thus the highest comparative rate of population in this country, estimating it in districts of any considerable extent, is a little less than that of the whole kingdom of Denmark, and very materially exceeding that of Spain.

Still you will scarcely be able to obtain a just idea of the outward appearance of New-England from a knowledge of these facts. You must have often observed, in travelling through the most populous countries of Europe, how few of their people are seen. France, for instance, only shows the millions with which she is teeming, in her cities and villages. Nor are you struck with the populousness of even the

latter, unless you happen to enter them on fêtes, or have an opportunity of examining them in the evening, after the labourers have returned from the fields. This is, more or less, true with every other country in Europe. Even in England, one does not see much of the population out of the towns, unless at fairs, or merry-makings. Now I do not remember to have ever travelled so far through any country which appeared more populous than the parts of New-England described.* This peculiarity may be ascribed to several causes.

The whole country is subdivided into small freeholds, which are commonly tilled by their owners. The average size of these estates is probably less than a hundred acres. Each, as a general rule, has its house and out-houses. These buildings are usually very near the public roads, and consequently in plain view of the traveller. The field labour is also commonly done at no great distance from the highway. In addition to these reasons, the Americans are thought to perform more journeys, and, consequently, to be more before the eye of their visiters than common. Cadwallader accounts for the latter circumstance in various ways. The greatness of the intermediate distances is the chief of his reasons. But the mental activity of the people, together with the absence of want, are thought to have a proportionate effect. I hear wonders of the throngs that are seen, at certain seasons, on the avenues which lead from the interior to any of the great markets. My companion assures me he once counted eight hundred wagons in the distance of forty miles, most of which were conveying wheat to the city of Albany. On the same road there were sixty taverns in a distance of as many miles; a sufficient proof in itself of the amount of travelling.

* Part of the North of Italy may, perhaps, be excepted.

Now, all this does not at all comport with our vague European notions of America. We are apt to imagine it a thinly populated, wooded, and fertile, though little cultivated region. Thinly populated it assuredly is, when the whole number of its square miles is compared to the whole amount of its population. But from what I have seen and heard, I feel persuaded, that an American, who understood his ground, might conduct a stranger, who knew nothing of the true numbers of the country, over a territory which shall greatly exceed France in extent, and leave the impression on the mind of his guest, that it was more populous than the latter kingdom. In hazarding this opinion, however, I except the effect of the great towns, and of the villages on fête days and at evenings. In continental Europe the traveller often feels a sense of loneliness, though surrounded by millions of human beings. He sees no houses out of the villages; he meets few on the highways; even the field labourers are half the time removed from sight, and when he enters a wood, it is usually a tenantless forest. In the parts of America I have as yet visited, the very reverse is the case. Unless in particular instances, houses occurred at very short intervals; the highways were not thronged as described by Cadwallader, it is true, but I saw more travellers than is usual in the season of harvest; and I scarcely recollect the moment when my eye could not discover groups of field labourers. Of wood there was certainly plenty; but of forests, with the exception of now and then a mountain, scarcely any. At the latter fact, no less than at the air of populousness which distinguishes this portion of the country, I have been greatly surprised. I passed several comparatively barren tracts which were suffered to sustain what wood they might, and I saw ridges of uneven, broken land, that probably still lay in their native shades; but the character of the whole dis-

trict was that of a succession of fields, sprinkled with houses, and embellished with little groves, that were reserved for the domestic supply of their respective owners. Indeed, in some quarters, there actually appeared less wood than was necessary, when it is remembered the inhabitants use little other fuel, and how expensive the transportation of an article so heavy soon becomes.

I should not describe New-England as a particularly fertile region. A large proportion of its surface, at least of the part I saw, was rugged and difficult of tillage, though but little of it was positively sterile. It is rather a grazing, than a grain country. For the former, it is well adapted; the land apparently producing rich and sweet grasses in almost every quarter. There were, however, large districts of deep alluvial soil, where any plant that will thrive in this climate might be successfully grown. I scarcely remember so beautiful a country, or a more fertile looking one, than some of that I passed along the borders of the Connecticut. The river bottoms were loaded with their products, and the adjacent swells were every where crowned with evidences of the abundance they had lavished on their possessors, in the shape of well-stored barns and spacious and comfortable dwellings. In this excursion I first saw extensive and luxuriant fields of that favourite American plant—the maize. It is deemed an infallible test of the quality of the soil, no less than of the climate, throughout most of the Union. Where maize will not grow, the husbandman is reluctant to dwell. It furnishes a healthful nourishment for man and beast, nor is there any useful animal that will not thrive upon its food. I do not think I passed a solitary farm that had not more or less maize in cultivation. It is universally called "corn" *par excellence.* As it is indigenous to the country, sometimes the word Indian is prefixed. But when an American says

"corn," he invariably means "maize." It is a splendid plant as it grows in this country, surpassing in appearance any other that appertains to husbandry. It is said to be still finer and more luxuriant to the south, but to me, there was great pleasure, as I saw it here, in gazing at its broad, gracefully curving, dark green blades, as they waved in the wind. It was in the tassel, and its ordinary height could not be much less than eight feet. Many fields must have exceeded this growth.

New-England may justly glory in its villages! Notwithstanding the number of detached houses that are every where seen, villages are far from unfrequent, and often contain a population of some two or three thousand. In space, freshness, an air of neatness and of comfort, they far exceed any thing I have ever seen, even in the mother country. With now and then an exception of some one among them that possesses a more crowded, commercial, or manufacturing population, than common, they all partake of the same character. I have passed, in one day, six or seven of these beautiful, tranquil and enviable looking hamlets, for not one of which have I been able to recollect an equal in the course of all my European travelling. They tell me, here, that villages, or small towns, abound in the newer portions of the northern and western states, that even eclipse those of New-England, since they unite, to all the neatness and space of the latter, the improvements of a still more modern origin.

In order to bring to your mind's eye a sketch of New-England scenery, you are to draw upon your imagination for the following objects. Fancy yourself on some elevation that will command the view of a horizon that embraces a dozen miles. The country within this boundary must be undulating, rising in bold swells, or occasionally exhibiting a broken, if not a ragged surface. But these inequalities must be

counterbalanced by broad and rich swales of land, that frequently spread out into lovely little valleys. If there be a continued range of precipitous heights in view, let it be clad in the verdure of the forest. If not, wood must be scattered in profusion over the landscape, in leafy shadows that cover surfaces of twenty and thirty acres. Buildings, many white, relieved by Venetian blinds in green, some of the dun colour of time, and others of a dusky red, must be seen standing amid orchards, and marking, by their positions, the courses of the numberless highways. Here and there, a spire, or often two, may be seen pointing towards the skies from the centre of a cluster of roofs. Perhaps a line of blue mountains is to be traced in the distance, or the course of a river to be followed by a long succession of fertile meadows. The whole country is to be subdivided by low stone walls, or wooden fences, made in various fashions, the quality of each improving, or deteriorating, as you approach, or recede from the dwelling of the owner of the soil. Cattle are to be seen grazing in the fields, or ruminating beneath the branches of single trees, that are left for shade in every pasture, and flocks are to be seen clipping the closer herbage of the hill sides. In the midst of this picture must man be placed, quiet, orderly, and industrious. By limiting this rural picture to greater, or less extensive, scenes of similar quiet and abundance, or occasionally swelling it out, until a succession of villages, a wider range of hills, and some broad valley, through which a third-rate American river winds its way to the ocean, are included, your imagination can embrace almost every variety of landscape I beheld in the course of my journey.

Concerning the character of the people, you cannot expect me to write very profoundly on so short an acquaintance. In order, however, that you may know how to estimate the value of the opinions I shall ven-

ture to give, it is necessary that you should learn the circumstances under which they have been formed. Before parting from Cadwallader, I requested he would give me some brief written directions, not only of the route I was to pursue, but of the manner in which I was to regulate my intercourse with the people. I extract the substance of his reply, omitting the line of route he advised, which is already known to you.

"As respects intercourse with the inhabitants, your path is perfectly plain. You speak the language with what we call the intonation of an Englishman. In America, while there are provincial, or state peculiarities, in tone, and even in the pronunciation and use of certain words, there is no patois. An American may distinguish between the Georgian and the New-Englandman, but you cannot. In this particular our ears are very accurate, and while we can, and do pass for natives every day in England, it is next to impossible for an Englishman to escape detection in America. Five out of six of the whole English nation, let them be educated ever so much, retain something of the peculiarity of their native county. The exceptions are much fewer than they suppose themselves, and are chiefly in the very highest circles. But there is also a slang of society in England, which forms no part of the true language. Most of those who escape the patois, adopt something of the slang of the day. There is also a fashion of intonation in the mother country which it is often thought vulgar to omit. All these differences, with many others, which it may be curious to notice hereafter, mark the Englishman at once. I think, therefore, you will be mistaken for a native of some of the less accurate counties of England. It will, in consequence, be necessary for you to be more on your guard against offence than if you were thought a German, or a Frenchman. The reasons for this caution are perfectly obvious. It is not

because the American is more disposed to seek grounds of complaint against his English visiter, but because he has been more accustomed to find them.

All *young* travellers are, as a matter of course, grumblers; but an Englishman is proverbially *the* grumbler. It is generally enough for him, that he meets an usage different from that to which he has been accustomed, to condemn it. It is positively true, that an intelligent and highly talented individual of that country, once complained to me, that in the month of January the days were so much *shorter* in New-York than in London!* His native propensity had blinded him to the material fact, that the former city was in 41°, while the latter lay 10° higher. Now, the Englishman may grumble any where else with more impunity than in America. In France, in Germany, or in Italy, he is not often understood, and half the time, a Frenchman, in particular, is disposed to think his country is receiving compliments, instead of anathemas. But with an American, there can of course be no such mistake. He not only understands the sneer, but he knows whence it comes. Though far from obtrusive on such occasions, it is not rare for the offended party to retort, whenever the case will admit of his interference. The consequence has been, that, as a class, the English travellers now behave themselves better in America than in any other country. But a character has been gained, and it will require a good deal of time to eradicate it. The servant of the respectable Mr. Hodgson tells his master that the people of the inns "are surprised to find Englishmen behave so well." But after all, with a

* This mistake is not, in truth, as absurd as it first seems. The twilight, in high latitudes, serves to eke out the day, so as greatly to subtract from the amount of total darkness. Had the gentleman in question chosen any other part of England than London, he might have found some pretext for his opinion.

great deal that is not only absurd, but offensive, there is something that may be excused in the discontent of an Englishman, when travelling in a foreign country. The wealth of an immense empire has centered at home, in a comparatively diminutive kingdom, and he who can command a tolerable proportion of that wealth may purchase a degree of comfort that is certainly not to be obtained out of it. But comfort is not the only consequence of those broad distinctions between the very rich, and the very poor. It is saying nothing new, to say that the lower orders of the English, more particularly those who are brought in immediate contact with the rich, exceed all other Christians in abject servility to their superiors. It may be new, but in reflecting on the causes, you will perceive it is not surprising, that on the contrary, the common American should be more natural, and less reserved in his communications with men above him in the scale of society, than the peasant of Europe. While the English traveller, therefore, is more exacting, the American labourer is less disposed to be submissive than usual. But every attention within the bounds of reason will be shown you, though it is not thought in reason, in New-England especially, that one man should assume a tone of confirmed superiority over the rest of mankind, merely because he wears a better coat, or has more money in his purse. Notwithstanding this stubborn temper of independence, no man better understands the obligations between him who pays, and him who receives, than the native of New-England. The inn-keeper of Old England, and the inn-keeper of New-England, form the very extremes of their class. The one is obsequious to the rich, the other unmoved, and often apparently cold. The first seems to calculate at a glance, the amount of profit you are likely to leave behind you; while his opposite appears only to calculate in what manner he can most contribute to

your comfort, without materially impairing his own It is a mistake, however, that the latter is filled with a sense of his own imaginary importance. It troubles him as little as the subject does any other possessor of a certain established rank, since there is no one to dispute it. He is often a magistrate, the chief of a battalion of militia, or even a member of a state legislature. He is almost always a man of character; for it is difficult for any other to obtain a license to exercise the calling. If he has the pride of conscious superiority, he is not wanting in its principles. He has often even more: he has frequently a peculiar pride in his profession. I have known a publican, who filled a high and responsible situation in the government of the first state of this confederation, officiously convey my baggage to a place of security, because he thought it was his duty to protect my property when under his roof. An English inn-keeper would not have impaired his domestic importance by such an act. He would have called upon John, the head-waiter, and John would probably have bid Thomas Ostler, or Boots, to come to his assistance. In both cases, the work would be done, I grant you; but under very different feelings. I profess to no more knowledge of the boasted English inn-keeper, than what any one may gain, who has travelled among them, in every manner, from a seat on the top of a stage-coach, to one in a post-chaise and four. But, with the publican of New-England, I have a long and intimate acquaintance, and I fearlessly affirm, that he has been the subject of much and groundless calumny.

"If servility, an air of *empressement*, and a mercenary interest in your comforts, form essentials to your happiness and self-complacency, England, with a full pocket, against the world. But, if you can be content to receive consistent civility, great kindness, and a temperate respect, in which he who serves you

consults his own character no less than yours, and all at a cheap rate, you will travel not only in New-England, but throughout most of the United States with perfect satisfaction. God protect the wretch whom poverty and disease shall attack in an English inn! Depend on it, their eulogies have been written by men who were unaccustomed to want. It is even a calamity to be obliged to have a saving rega d to the contents of your purse, under the observation of their mercenary legions! There seems an intuitive ability in all that belongs to them, to graduate your wealth, your importance, and the extent of their own servility. Now, on the other hand, a certain reasoning distinction usually controls the manner in which the American inn-keeper receives his guests. He pays greater attention to the gentleman than to the tin-pedlar, because he knows it is necessary to the habits of the former, and because he thinks it is no more than a just return for the greater price he pays. But he is civil, and even kind, to both alike. He sometimes makes blunders, it is true, for he meets with characters that are new to him, or is required to decide on distinctions of which he has no idea. A hale, well-looking, active, and intelligent American, will scarcely ever submit his personal comforts, or the hourly control of his movements, to the caprices of another, by becoming a domestic servant. Neither would the European, if he could do any thing better. It is not astonishing, therefore, that a publican, in a retired quarter of the country, should sometimes be willing to think that the European servants he sees, are entitled to eat with their masters, or that he calls both 'gentlemen.' A striking and national trait in the American, is a constant and grave regard to the feelings of others. It is even more peculiar to New-England, than to any other section of our country. It is the best and surest fruit of high civilization. Not that civilization which chisels marble and gilds *salons*,

ut that which marks the progress of reason, and which, under certain circumstances, makes men polished, and, under all, renders them humane. In this particular, America is, beyond a doubt, the most civilized nation in the world, inasmuch as the aggregate of her humanity, intelligence and comfort, compared with her numbers, has nothing like an equal.

"From these facts, you may easily glean a knowledge of the personal treatment you are likely to receive in your approaching excursion. There will be an absence of many of those forms to which you have been accustomed, but their place will be supplied by a disinterested kindness, that it may require time to understand, but which, once properly understood, can never be supplied by any meretricious substitute. I never knew an American of healthful feelings, who did not find more disgust than satisfaction, in the obsequiousness of the English domestics. For myself, I will avow that the servility, which I can readily understand may become so necessary by indulgence, gave me a pain that you will, perhaps, find it difficult to comprehend. I do not say it may not be necessary in Europe, particularly in England, but I do say, thank God, it is not necessary here.

"It will be prudent, at all times, to treat those who serve you with great attention to their feelings. An instance may serve as an example. A few years since, I was in a boat, on one of our interior waters, accompanied by a fine, gentlemanlike, manly, aristocratic young Englishman. One of the boatmen incommoded us with his feet. 'Go forward, Sir,' said my English companion, in a tone that would have answered better on the Thames, than on the Cayuga. The boatman looked a little surprised, and a good deal determined. There was an evident struggle, between his pride and his desire not to give offence to a stranger. 'We have scarcely room here for our feet,' I observed; you will go forward, we shall be more comfort-

able.' 'Oh! with all my heart, Sir,' returned the man, who complied without any further hesitation. The same individual, if left to his own suggestions, or not assailed in his pride, would probably have plunged into the lake for our pleasure, and that, too, without stopping to consider whether he was to get six-pence for his ducking. With this single caution you may go from Maine to Georgia with perfect safety, and, most of the distance, with sufficient comfort; often with more even than in England, and, generally, at a price which, compared with what you receive, is infinitely below the cheapest rate of travelling in any part of Europe. It is a ludicrous mistake, that you must treat every American as your companion in society, but it is very necessary that he should be treated as your equal in the eye of God."

I must leave you, for the moment, with this morceau from the pen of Cadwallader, who writes as he speaks, like a man who thinks better of his countrymen than we have been accustomed to believe they deserve. I must postpone, to my next, the commentaries that my own trifling experience has suggested on his theory.—Adieu.

TO SIR EDWARD WALLER, BART.

&c. &c.

New-York, ———

Although stages, as the public coaches are, by corruption, called in this country, run on most of the roads travelled in my recent journey, I decided to make the excursion, at a little cost, in a private conveyance. A neat, light, and elegant pleasure-wagon on horizontal springs, with a driver and a pair of fleet,

well-formed horses, were procured for five dollars a day. A coach might have been had for the same sum. This price, however, was the highest, and included every charge. There was ample room for Fritz and myself, with what baggage we needed, and a vacant seat by the side of the coachman. Capacious leather tops protected us from the weather, and good aprons could, if necessary, cover our feet. In short, the vehicle, which is exceedingly common here, is not unlike what is called a double, or travelling, phaëton, in England. You are to remember, there is no travelling post in America. Relays of horses can certainly be had, between the principal towns, at a reasonably short notice; but the great facility, rapidity, ease, and cheapness of communication by steam-boats, will probably for a long time prevent posting from coming into fashion.

We left Manhattan island, on which New-York stands, by a long wooden bridge that connects it with the adjacent county of West-Chester. There is a singular air of desertion about that portion of this island which is not covered by the town, and which I was inclined to ascribe to a sort of common expectation in its owners that the ground would be soon wanted for other purposes than plantations of trees, or pleasure-grounds. It is said, however, that a delay in the regulation of the great avenues and future streets of the city, has produced the apparent neglect. Let the cause be what it may, I do not remember ever to have seen the immediate environs of so large a town in such a state of general abandonment. The island is studded with villas, certainly; but even most of these seemed but little cared for. I did not, however, get a view of those which lie on the two rivers.*

* Vast improvements have been made, in this part of the island, within the last three years.

I found West-Chester a constant succession of hills and dales, with numberless irregular little valleys, though with nothing that, in English, is called a mountain. The description I have given you, in my last letter, of the general appearance of New-England, will answer perfectly well also for this portion of New-York. The villages were neither so beautiful, nor so numerous, as those I afterwards passed; but in the character of the land, the situation and number of the farm-houses, the multitude of highways, the absence of forests, and the abundance of little groves, the two districts are precisely the same. As respects the great frequency of the public roads, the peculiarity is subject to a very simple explanation. You will remember the whole country is subdivided into the small freeholds mentioned, and that each citizen has a claim to have access to his farm. Each township, as parishes, or *cantons*, are here called, has the entire control of all the routes within its own limits, unless the road be the property of a chartered company. These highways are periodically worked by the inhabitants, agreeably to a rate of assessment, which is regulated according to the personal means of each individual. Every thing of a public nature, that will readily admit of such an intervention, is, in this republican government, controlled by the people in their original character. Thus, all the officers of each town are annually elected, by its inhabitants, in what are called "the town-meetings." These officers comprise the assessors of taxes, their collectors, the overseers of the highways, &c. &c., and, in short, the whole of its police, with, perhaps, the exception of the magistrates, who receive their appointments from different sources. Now, it is evident, that when the power to construct and to repair roads and bridges is removed, by so short an interval, from those who are most affected by their position and condition, that the *public servants*, as the officers are here emphatically

called, must pay the utmost deference to the public will. The ordinary routes of the country are, therefore, arranged in such a manner as will most accommodate those who work them. But, as this arrangement must often produce conveniences that are more likely to satisfy individuals than the public, great routes that unite important points of the country, are often substituted for the local highways. These great routes are constructed on two plans. In cases where the convenience of the public requires it, laws are enacted for the purpose by the legislatures, and the route is made what is called a *state-road*. In others, where it is believed capitalists may be induced to invest their money, charters are given, a rate of toll established, and the road becomes the property of a company. The latter are numerous in New-England, nor are the charges at all high.

It is evident that the labour of constructing the vast number of roads and bridges which are necessary to satisfy the public and private wants of a community that does not exceed the population of Prussia, throughout a country as large as half Europe, must be exceedingly burthensome. What I have already seen, however, has given me the most respectful opinion of the native energy of this people; but I shall not anticipate impressions, which may be increased, or, possibly, changed, as I "prick deeper into the bowels of the land." Thus far I can say, that nowhere, including great routes and cross-roads, have I found better highways than in New-England, the mother country alone excepted. If the former are not so good as in England, the latter are, however, often better. Perhaps I travelled at a favourable time of the year; but the bridges, the causeways, the diggings, and the levellings, must be there at all seasons.

On the morning of the second day, my coachman, while trotting leisurely along an excellent path,

through a retired part of the country, pointed a-head with his whip, and told me we were about to enter the State of Connecticut. One hand was mechanically thrust into my pocket, in search of a passport and a glance of the eye was thrown at the trunks, in order to recall the nature of the contraband articles they might happen to contain. A moment of thought recalled me to a sense of my actual position, and of the extraordinary extent of the personal freedom in which I was indulged. One of my first questions, on landing, had been to inquire for the Bureau of the Police, in order to obtain the necessary permission to remain in the country, and to visit the interior. The individual in the hotel, to whom I addressed myself, *did not understand me!* Further inquiry told me that such things were utterly unknown in America. My baggage was passed at the Custom-house without charge of any sort, except a trifling official fee for a permit to land it; nor did any one present himself to ask or claim compensation for what I could have done better without him. I paid a cartman half-a-dollar for transporting the trunks to my lodgings, where, assisted by the servants of the house, they were placed in the proper room, and then every body silently disappeared, as if no more had been done than what was naturally required by the circumstances. These were the whole of the ceremonials observed at my landing in America. My entrance into Connecticut was not distinguished by any more remarkable incidents. "When shall we reach the frontier?" I asked of the coachman, after a little delay. "I believe the line is along the wall of that field," he said, pointing carelessly *behind* him. "What! is there nothing else to distinguish the boundary between two independent sovereignties? No officers of the customs, no agents of the police, nor any one to ask us where we go, or whence we come?" The driver looked at me, as if he distrusted my reason a

little; but he continued mute. This silent passage from one state to another, gave me the first true impression I have obtained of the intimate nature of the connexion which unites this vast confederation. One may study its theory on paper for a twelvemonth, without arriving at so just a conception of the identity of the national character and interests of this people as I have acquired in visiting, in the same quiet manner, six of their sovereignties, and in finding everywhere so great a similarity of manners, customs, and opinions, unmolested by a single official form. There is something like it, certainly, in your own country; but you are governed by one prince, one minister and one parliament. Here, each state enacts its own laws, levies its own taxes, and exercises all the more minute and delicate functions of sovereign power The United States of America is the only civilized country, I believe, into which a stranger can enter without being liable to intrusions on his privacy by the agents of the police.* Assuredly this power is now used, throughout all Europe, with great discretion and moderation; but that country may deem itself happy, that never feels any necessity for its exercise. To what is this peculiar freedom owing? To their position, their spare population,—to the absence or to the height of civilization? Colombia, and Mexico, and Brazil, and a dozen others, are just as remote from Europe, and far less populous. Absence of civilization is not denoted by absence of restraint, in countries where life, character, and property are more than usually respected. I fear, Waller, that we have been too apt to confound these Americans with their soil, and to believe that, because the one is fresh, the other must also exist in the first stages of society. At all events, if not far beyond the rest of the world in

* Possibly some of the British colonies can claim nearly the same exemptions from the interference of the police.

the great desiderata of order and reason, they have some most ingenious methods of imposing on the senses of a traveller, who, I can affirm, is often at an utter loss to discover the machinery by which the wheels of the social engine are made to roll on so smoothly, so swiftly, and so cheap. I have not seen a bayonet (except among the militia who received La Fayette,) a *gendarme*, a horse-patrol, a constable, (to know him,) nor a single liveried agent of this secret power. In short, if one should draw somewhat literally on the ten commandments for rules to govern his intercourse with those around him, so far as I can see, he might pass his whole life here without necessarily arriving at the practical knowledge that there is any government at all.

"Now we are in New-York again," said my driver, some ten or fifteen minutes after he had assured me we had entered Connecticut. The apparent contradiction was explained by a winding in the road, which had led us through the extreme point of an angle of the latter state. I looked around me in every direction, in order to discover if the least trace of any differences in origin, or customs, could be seen. I remembered to have heard Cadwallader say, that the effects of the policy pursued by the different States were sometimes visible, to an observant traveller, at a glance, and that he could often tell when he had passed a State line, by such testimony as his eye alone could gather. As I could not then, nor have not since, been able to detect any of these evidences of a different policy, I am inclined to think that the Americans themselves make some such distinctions in the case, as those by which the connoisseurs can tell the colouring of one painter from that of another, or those by which they know the second manner of the divine master of the art from his third.*

* A more intelligible distinction certainly became apparent between the slave-holding and non-slave-holding states.

Before leaving the State of New-York the second time, I had an opportunity of paying a short visit to one of those distinguished men, who, by acting with so much wisdom, moderation, dignity, and firmness, during the dark days of this republic, imparted to its revolution a reputation that is peculiarly their own. I have ever been an enthusiastic admirer of the conduct of the Americans throughout those trying scenes They need not hesitate to place it with confidence in comparison with any thing that history may boast. The deeds of the eighteenth century are less equivocal than the patriotism of Brutus, or the clemency of Scipio. Men are far more likely now to be judged by their acts than their words, though even this direct and literal people have uttered sentiments, which, by their simplicity and truth, are entitled to be placed on the same page with the finest sayings of antiquity. The agents of the British government, who wished to tamper with the loyalty of a distinguished patriot, received an answer that would have done honour to any Roman. "Tell your employer," said the stern republican, "that I am not worth buying; but such as I am, the king of England is not rich enough to make the purchase!"

The individual at whose residence I paid a passing visit, as a species of homage due to public virtue, was John Jay. This distinguished statesman had discharged many of the public trusts of his country, at a time when life and death hung on the issue. He was President of Congress during the war of the Revolution, before the present system was adopted, and when the country possessed no officer of higher dignity, or greater power.* He was, however, early sent on

* A mistake is often made in Europe, by blending this ancient officer with the President of the United States. Before the present constitution was adopted, (1789,) there was a President of Congress. At present. Congress is divided into two branches, a

foreign missions of great delicacy, and of the last importance. He resided a long time in Spain, unacknowledged, it is true, but eminently serviceable by the weight of his character, and the steadiness of his deportment. He signed the treaty of peace, (in conjunction with Franklin and the elder Adams,) having a singularly important agency in bringing about that event which secured an acknowledgment of his country's independence, and he negotiated the first treaty of commerce and amity with Great Britain. An anecdote concerning the second of these treaties had been related to me, which is worthy of repetition, though I dare not give you any better authority for its correctness, than to say that it is of such a nature that I believe the circumstances, as I am about to relate them, are essentially true. Indeed, it was one of the chief inducements I felt for intruding on the privacy of a man, whose past life and present character impart a dignity that should render his retirement almost sacred.

You undoubtedly know that, during the American war, an alliance was formed between France and the

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Senate and a House of Representatives, each of which has its presiding officer. The Vice-President of the United States is, *ex officio*, the head of the Senate, though a substitute, to act on occasion, is always appointed, who is called the President of the Senate. The style by which the Vice-President is addressed in the Senate, is "Mr. President." The House of Representatives has a Speaker, like the English parliament—he is addressed as "Mr. Speaker." An individual who belongs to the lower house is, in common parlance, called a member of Congress, and one of the upper, a senator, or a member of the Senate. These distinctions, with some trifling exceptions, are observed in all the state legislatures, where the lieutenant-governors commonly perform the duties in the upper houses, that the Vice-President discharges in the Senate of the United States. Thus, though there is a President of the United States, a President of the Senate (the Vice-President of the United States), and a Speaker of the House of Representatives, there is no such officer now known to the country as a "President of Congress."

new power. One of the customary conditions of this treaty was a stipulation that peace should not be made by either party without the consent of both. When England had become sufficiently prepared by her reverses to listen to amicable propositions, the American government ordered their minister in Spain (Mr. Jay), and their minister in Holland (Mr. Adams) to proceed to Paris, and by uniting themselves to the minister in France (Dr. Franklin), to form a commission authorized to manage the expected negotiation on the part of the new republic. The latter of these gentlemen had been long accredited near the court of Versailles, where, by a happy union of great simplicity of manners, wisdom, and wit, he had become an object of singular admiration and affection. But the Americans say, that Franklin was a much better philosopher than politician. Be this as it might, the story adds, that France, now the drama was about to close, began to cast about her for the profits of the representation. The Count de Vergennes had early succeeded in persuading Dr. Franklin, that as England could not, nor would not, formally acknowledge the *independence* of America, his better course would be to accept a *truce*, for twenty years, at the end of which period his country would be sufficiently strong to take what she needed for herself. The philosopher is said to have acquiesced in this opinion, and began to stir his mighty reason in maturing the terms of this remarkable truce. In this state of mind he was found by Mr. Jay, on his arrival from Madrid. The latter was not slow to perceive the effects of such a course, nor to detect the secret source whence the insidious counsel flowed. His eyes had not been dazzled by the splendour of a luxurious court, nor his ears soothed by the flattery of a polished nation. For a long time he had been content to dwell in obscurity in Spain, sacrificing every thing but his country's interests to his manliness and directness of character. He

had steadily declined an interview with the king of the latter country, because he could not be received openly as an accredited minister. In short, he had too long patiently submitted to mortifications and retirement, rather than compromise the character of his nation, to see the substance at which he aimed so easily converted to a shadow. Mr. Jay denounced the policy of the Count de Vergennes, and declared that the unqualified independence of his country must be a *sine qua non* in any treaty which bore his name. Mr. Adams soon joined the negotiation, and took the side of independence. Franklin, who was at heart a true patriot, suffered the film to be drawn from his eyes, and perfect union soon presided in their councils. But England had not been unapprized of the disposition of America to receive a truce. Her commissioner, Mr. Oswald, appeared with instructions to go no further. In this dilemma a step is ascribed to Mr. Jay, that I believe is as remarkable for its boldness as for its good sense. He is said to have written, with his own hand, to the English Secretary of State, pointing out the bad consequences to England herself, if she adhered to her present policy. By keeping the truce suspended over America, she forced that country to lean on France for support; whereas, by admitting her, at once, into the rank of nations, England would obtain a valuable customer, and might also secure a natural friend. Thus instructed in a better policy, the English minister saw his error, and the same courier who conveyed the letter of Mr. Jay, returned with instructions to Mr. Oswald to acknowledge the independence of the United States. Finding themselves embarrassed by the evasions of Count de Vergennes, believing they were betrayed, in the spirit of their alliance at least, and knowing that France could not find the smallest difficulty in settling her own affairs without their agency, the American commissioners proceeded to sign a treaty of peace

in the very teeth of their instructions, without the knowledge of the French minister. When the latter found that his policy had not succeeded, he wrote a sharp note of remonstrance, which Dr. Franklin laid before his brother commissioners. It was much easier to perform a great act, like the one in which they had been engaged, than to word a proper reply to this communication. There was but one ground on which their apparent want of faith could be justified, and to give that to the Count de Vergennes, might probably be much more true than polite. After a good deal of hesitation, they discovered that the letter bore the simple superscription of Dr. Franklin, and the colleagues of the latter imposed on him the duty of answering a note, which they gravely insisted was not officially addressed to the commissioners. How well the philosopher acquitted himself of this delicate affair, my information does not say; but though a vote of censure on the commissioners was proposed in Congress, their conduct was thought, under the circumstances, so very justifiable, that it was never passed. Now, I repeat, for all this I cannot name my authority, since living men are parties to the transaction, but I will again say, that it is so respectable, that I believe the anecdote to be substantially correct.

On his return from Europe, Mr. Jay for some time filled the office of Minister for Foreign Affairs. He took a distinguished part in forming the present constitution of the United States. In conjunction with Hamilton and Madison, he wrote the celebrated essays under the signature of the Federalist, which have since come to be a text-book for the principles of the American government. He was then made Chief Justice of the United States, having been educated for the bar, which office he resigned, in order to proceed to England to negotiate the treaty of commerce. He was afterwards six years governor

of his native state (New-York,) after which he retired from political life altogether, refusing the office of Chief Justice again, which was offered to him by his old coadjutor Adams, then about also to retire from the chair of the presidency of the United States.

Since the latter period, near five and twenty years, Mr. Jay has lived on the hereditary estate where I saw him, enjoying the profound, and I might also say, idolatrous respect of all who enter his private circle. As his manner of living may serve to give you a better idea of the usages of this country, I will endeavour to give a short description of so much of it, as may be done without violating that respect which is due to the hospitality and frankness of my reception. I shall merely premise, I have already discovered that official rank, in this country, furnishes no certain clue to the rank of an individual in ordinary society, nor consequently to the style in which he may choose to regulate his establishment. In order that you may understand me, however, it is necessary that I should go a little into detail.

One hears a great deal in Europe of the equality of the United States. Now, if you will make a moderate allowance for the effects which are produced by the division of property on the death of its possessor, or the facility with which estates are acquired, and to the fact that no legal orders exist in the community, you may, with a certain qualification, take the general rules which govern the associations and habits of all other countries, as applicable to this. In order, however, to measure accurately the degree of influence the circumstances just named produce, probably requires a greater knowledge of America than I possess. Though it is quite apparent that those conventional castes which divide the whole civilized world into classes, are to be found here, just as they are in Europe, they appear to be separated

by less impassable barriers. The features of society are substantially the same, though less strongly marked. You, as an Englishman, can find no difficulty in understanding, that the opinions and habits of all the different divisions in life may prevail without patents of nobility. They are the unavoidable consequences of differences in fortune, education and manners. In no particular, that I can discover, does the situation of an American gentleman differ from that of an English gentleman, except that the former must be content to enjoy his advantages as a concession of the public opinion, and not as a right. I can readily believe that the American, whatever might be his name, fortune, or even personal endowments, who should arrogate that manner of superiority over his less fortunate countrymen that the aristocracy of your country so often assume to their inferiors, would be in great danger of humiliation; but I cannot see that he is in any sense the less of a gentleman for the restraint. I think I have already discovered the source of a very general error on the subject of American society. Short as has been my residence in the country, I have met with many individuals of manners and characters so very equivocal, as scarcely to know in what conventional order they ought to be placed. There has been so singular a compound of intelligence, kindness, natural politeness, coarseness, and even vulgarity, in many of these persons, that I am often utterly baffled in the attempt to give them a place in the social scale. One is ashamed to admit that men who at every instant are asserting their superiority in intellect and information, can belong to an inferior condition; and yet one is equally reluctant to allow a claim to perfect equality, on the part of those who are constantly violating the rules of conventional courtesy. That the forms of even polite intercourse, in this country, are different in very many particulars from our own, is quite evident, but it is

far less apparent that Europe enjoys any very decided advantage on this account. If I should venture to give an opinion, thus early, on a question that in its nature is so very delicate, I should say, that we give to hundreds of Americans a place in their own society, which, in fact, they cannot claim, merely because we discover in them certain qualifications that few or none possess in Europe, who are not actually members of her social *elite*. But this is anticipating a subject on which I may be much better prepared to write a twelvemonth hence.

I have told you that official rank in America has very little connexion with rank in ordinary society. This assertion, however, is liable to some little exception. There are certain political stations of so much dignity, as in a great measure to entail on their possessors, and even on their families, the indefinable privileges of caste, here as elsewhere, though from what I can learn this is far from being invariably the case. Thus, while the office of President of the United States, or of Governor of a State, will, in their very nature, open the doors of most houses to their incumbents, a man may be a member of Congress, or even a Senator, and continue to fill his original station in ordinary life. This, also, you, as an Englishman, ought to understand, nor will it be much longer unintelligible in all those other countries of Europe, where representative governments are opening the avenues of political power to all men. Indeed, in France, even under the old regime, government and society were perfectly distinct. Now, just as America is more democratic in her institutions, just so much the more is this blending of conditions discernible in her distribution of political favours. Your countrymen are very apt to make themselves merry with the colonels and majors that are inn-keepers in America, but really it appears to me that these people have much the best right to laugh in the matter, since they

can find individuals fit to fill such stations, in a condi tion of life, that, in common, is occupied by men qualified to do little or nothing else than discharge the duties of their ordinary calling. But you have had your train-bands, with their pastry-cook, and fishmonger colonels, as well as the Americans. I know of but two points, then, in which you differ in this particular from the very people whom you affect to ridicule. I have not heard of any of your city warriors, who can show their scars, or who have ever encountered a danger, more formidable than effecting a defile in face of a pump, without throwing their phalanxes into confusion; whereas, I have seen more than one American veteran perform the offices of a host, who had faced with credit the best of your battalions, and who makes a matter of honest boasting that he has as often seen the back as the face of his enemies, they too, having been both English and French grenadiers. This is one, and no trifling point of distinction between the two classes. The other is, that your train-bands are rarely found beyond the influence of the household troops, or such other mercenaries as may serve to set them a proper example of loyalty, while the Americans, unhesitatingly, put arms into the hands of all their people who are of an age to carry them. I believe the latter, after all, is the true reason why colonels and majors so much abound in this country.

While crossing the state of Massachusetts the last time, I passed a night in the house of one of these military Bonifaces. He was precisely the sort of man Cadwallader had described; kind, independent, unassuming in fact, but unyielding in appearance; a colonel in the militia, a member of the State legislature, and, in short, one who at need would give you his own blanket and think no more of it, but who would refuse your money unless it were offered with civility, and as a just return for what he had bestowed.

I passed a half hour conversing with the old man who had seen a good deal of service during the wars of '56 and '76. We spoke of the different military systems pursued by England and America, and he not only seemed willing to do justice to the troops of the former, but he readily admitted that men who did nothing but 'train,' as he termed it, ought to be better soldiers than militia who entered the ranks but once or twice a year. Encouraged by this concession, I ventured to suggest it was possible that his nation was wrong in her policy, and that she might do better to imitate the example of other countries in her military policy at least. His answer was certainly characteristic, and I thought it not without some practical point. "Each people to their wants," he said. "In Europe you keep large standing armies because you can't hold together without them, and I conclude you pay for it. America has managed so far to do her own fighting, nor do I see that she has much need of doing that of any other people. As to the quality of the troops, we often handled the French roughly; we drove the English out of the Bay State in '76, and we have contrived to keep them out ever since: so far as I can see, that is all we want of a soldier, whether he be dressed in scarlet, or a coat of brown homespun. As to keeping order at home, we can still do that without using our muskets, thank God." Now, whether a nation that has managed to keep foreign invaders from her shores, and to preserve the most perfect order within her borders, without the agency of any better colonels, than such as sometimes act as inn-keepers, is entitled to the respect, or to the derision of the rest of the world, is a question I leave to your philosophy. At all events, communities which husband their resources, enjoy the comfortable assurance of having them at command, when their possession may become a matter of the last importance.

But all this is leading me from the subject. Although a description of the establishment of Mr. Jay should not mislead you into an impression that all those who have enjoyed public favour, in this country, live in a similar manner, it is certainly more true as to those who have arrived to the high dignities he once possessed. In point of size and convenience the dwelling of this distinguished American is about on a level with a third-rate English country house, or a second-rate French chateau. It has most of the comforts of the former, with some luxuries that are not easy to obtain in your island, and it is consequently both inferior and superior to the latter, in very many particulars. There is a mixture of use and appearance in the disposition of the grounds, that I am inclined to think very common about the residences of gentlemen of this country. The farm buildings, &c., though a little removed, were in plain view, as if their proprietor, while he was willing to escape from the inconveniences of a closer proximity, found a pleasure in keeping them at all times under his immediate eye. The house itself was partly of stone, and partly of wood, it having been built at different periods; but, as is usual here, with most of the better sort of dwellings, it was painted, and having a comfortable and spacious piazza along its *facade*, another common practice in this climate, it is not without some pretension externally; still its exterior, as well as its internal character, is that of respectable comfort, rather than of elegance, or show. The interior arrangements of this, no less than of most of the houses I have entered here, are decidedly of an English character. The furniture is commonly of mahogany, and carpets almost universally prevail, summer and winter. There is a great air of abundance in the houses of the Americans generally, and in those of the wealthy, it is mingled with something that we are apt to consider lux-

urious. I might have counted ten or twelve domestics about the establishment of Mr. Jay, all quiet, orderly, and respectful. They were both white and black. You probably know that the latter are all free here, slavery having been virtually abolished in New-York.* The servants wore no liveries, nor did I see many that did out of the city of New-York Though sometimes given, even there, they are far from frequent. They are always exceedingly plain, rarely amounting to more than a round hat with a gold or a silver band, and a coat, with cuffs and collars faced with a different cloth. Armorial bearings on carriages are much more frequent, though Cadwallader tells me it is getting to be more genteel to do without even them. He says the most ancient and honourable families, those whose descent is universally known, are the first to neglect their use. I saw the carriages of Mr. Jay, but their pannels were without any blazonry. I remarked, however, ancient plate in the house that bore those European marks of an honourable name, and which I did not hesitate to refer to the period of the colonial government. Mr. Jay himself is of French descent, his ancestor having been a refugee from the religious persecution that succeeded the revocation of the edict of Nantes. There are many families of similar descent in the United States, and among them are some of the first names of the country. I passed a little town in the county of West-Chester, that was said to have been originally settled by emigrants from the persecuted city of Rochelle. It bears the name of New Rochelle, and to this hour, though much blended by intermarriages with those of English origin, the people retain something of the peculiar look of their French ancestry. I saw on the signs, the names of

* It finally expired by law, July 4th, 1827.

Guion, Renaud, Bonnet, Florence, Flandereau, Coutant, &c. &c., all of which are clearly French, though the sound is commonly so perverted, that it may be said properly to belong to no language. There are also one or two others of these settlements in this state, and many more in different parts of the Union, but their peculiar national customs have long since been swallowed in the overwhelming influence of the English. The language is entirely lost among these children of France. I had, however, a trifling evidence of the length of time ancient usages will linger in our habits, even under the most unfavourable circumstances. My driver encountered, near New Rochelle, an old acquaintance, standing before the door of his own habitation. The horses either needed breath to mount a hill, or the worthy disciple of Phaëton chose to assume it. "Why do you leave the stumps of those dead apple-trees in your orchard?" demanded the coachman, who very soon began to throw a critical eye over the husbandry of his acquaintance. "Oh! I gather all my morelles around their roots. Without the mushrooms in the fall,* and the morelles in the spring, I should be as badly found as one of my oxen without salt." "Now, that is for his French blood," said my driver to Fritz, while mounting the hill; "for my part, I count a man a fool who will run the risk of being poisoned in order to tickle his palate with a mushroom." I have been told that these little peculiarities of their ancient French habits were all that was national which remained to the descendants of the Huguenots. Their religion had even undergone a change; the original French Protestants being Calvinists, whereas their descendants have almost all become united to what is here called the Episcopalian, or the Church of England.

* The Americans commonly call the autumn the 'fall;' from the falling of the leaf.

I scarcely remember to have mingled with any family, where there was a more happy union of quiet decorum, and high courtesy, than I met beneath the roof of Mr. Jay. The venerable statesman himself is distinguished, as much now, for his dignified simplicity, as he was, formerly, for his political sagacity, integrity, and firmness. By one class of his countrymen he is never spoken of without the profoundest respect. It is evident that there are some who have been accustomed to oppose him, though it is not difficult to see that they begin to wonder why. During my short stay beneath this hospitable roof, several of the yeomanry came to make visits of respect, or of business, to their distinguished neighbour. Their reception was frank and cordial, each man receiving the hand of the "Governor," as he is called, though it was quite evident that all approached him with the reverence a great man only can inspire. For my own part, I confess, I thought it a beautiful sight to see one who had mingled in the councils of nations, who had instructed a foreign minister in his own policy, and who had borne himself with high honour and lasting credit in the courts of mighty sovereigns, soothing the evening of his days by these little acts of bland courtesy, which, while they elevated others, in no respect subtracted from his own glory. His age and infirmities prevented as much intercourse as I could have wished with such a man, but the little he did communicate on the scenes in which he had been an actor, was uttered with so much clearness, simplicity, modesty, and discretion, that one was left to regret that he could not hear more.

There is a very general opinion in America, that Mr. Jay has been much occupied, in later life, in writing on the prophecies. Of course this is a subject on which I know nothing, but something occurred in the course of conversation which strongly inclines me to hazard a conjecture that they are not true. We

were speaking of some recent English works on the Apocalypse, when he expressed, in general terms, his sense of the fruitlessness of any inquiry, at the present hour, into their hidden meaning. I am rather inclined to think, that as this eminent man has endeavoured so to model his life, that he may be prepared for any and every developement of the mighty mystery, some curious, but incompetent observers of his habits have mistaken his motive, attributing that to a love of theory, which might, with more justice, be ascribed to the humbler and safer cause of practice. And here I must bid adieu to this estimable statesman; but before I take leave of you, I will mention a queer enough instance of the vagaries of the human mind, which has recently come under my observation, and which is oddly enough recalled by the connexion between Mr. Jay and his fancied avocations in retirement. It furnishes another proof of the precarious quality of all conjecture.

Every body has heard of Zerah Colburne, one of those inexplicable prodigies, whose faculties enable them to assume a command over the powers of numbers that is, probably, quite as much of a mystery to themselves, as to the rest of mankind. High expectations were raised of the effects which education might produce on the capacity of this boy. He went to England; exhibited; calculated; astonished every body; was patronized; sent to school; became a man; returned to his native country lately, and brought back with him the literary offering of a tragedy! I have seen the manuscript, and must say that I think, for once at least, "he has missed a figure."—Adieu.

TO SIR EDWARD WALLER, BART.

&c. &c.

New-York,———

THE six North-Eastern States of this great union compose what is called New-England.* The appellation is one of convention, and is unknown to the laws. It is a name given by a King of England, who appeared willing to conciliate that portion of his subjects, who had deserted their homes in quest of liberty of conscience, by a high-sounding title. It will be remembered that colonies of the Dutch and Swedes, at that time, separated the northern possessions of the English from those they held in Virginia. It is most probably owing to the latter circumstance that the inhabitants of the New-England provinces so long retained their distinctive character, which was scarcely less at variance with that of the slave-holding planters of the south, than with that of their more immediate neighbours, the Dutch. The pacific colonists of Penn brought with them but little to soften the lines of distinction, and after New-York became subject to the Crown of Britain, it was a *mélange* of Dutch quietude and English aristocracy. It was not until the Revolution had broken down the barriers of provincial prejudices, and cleared the way for the unrestrained exercise of the true national enterprise, that these territorial obstacles were entirely removed, and a thorough amalgamation of the people commenced. A few observations on the effect of this amalgamation, and the influence it has had on the char-

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* Maine, Massachusetts, New-Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode Island, and Connecticut.

acter of the nation, may not be thrown away here. The little I shall say is written under the inspection of Cadwallader, confirmed, if not improved, by my own observation.

The people of New-England are, even to this hour, distinguished among their own active and quick-witted countrymen, for their enterprise, frugality, order, and intelligence. The three latter qualities, taken in conjunction, I believe they have a right to claim to a degree that is elsewhere unequalled. The Scot and the Swiss, the Dane and the Swede, the German, the Belgian, or even the Frenchman, may be often as frugal, but there is always something of compulsion in European frugality. The inhabitant of New-England seems thrifty on principle; since he neglects no duty, forgets no decency, nor overlooks any of the higher obligations in order to save his money. He is eminently economical and provident in the midst of abundance. A sentiment of deep morality seems to influence his savings, which he hoards, in order that the superfluity of his wealth may be serviceable, as wealth should be, in securing his own private respectability, and in advancing the interests of the whole. No doubt, in a great community, where economy is rigidly practised as a virtue, some mistake its object, and pervert a quality, which is so eminently adapted to advance the general good, to the purposes of individual rapacity. But it is impossible to journey through New-England, and witness its air of abundance, its decency, the absence of want, the elevation of character, which is imparted to the meanest of its people, without respecting the sources whence they flow. A prudent and discreet economy is, in itself, an evidence of a reflecting and instructed being, as order is the necessary attendant of abundance and thought. You may form some estimate of the degree of intelligence which is diffused throughout the community in New-England, by the facts contained in a

report I lately read concerning the progress of general instruction in Massachusetts. That State contains nearly 600,000 souls, all of whom (of proper age,) with the exception of about 400, could read and write. It is probable that the latter number was composed chiefly of foreigners, blacks from other States, and those who laboured under natural disabilities. But reading, writing, and arithmetic, are far from being the limits of the ordinary instruction of the lower American schools. A vast deal of useful and creditable knowledge, moral and useful, is also obtained in learning to read. I have known Cadwallader to say repeatedly, that in referring to familiar history and geography, he invariably passes by all his later acquisitions in the academies and university, to draw upon the stores he obtained during his infancy in one of the common schools of the country. Perhaps, in this particular, he differs but little from most educated men every where; but it is an important fact to remember that the children of his father's tradesmen, and indeed of every other man in the place, enjoyed precisely the same means of obtaining this species of information, as the son of the affluent landlord. He also pointed out another important fact, as distinguishing the quality of the knowledge acquired in the schools of America from that which is obtained in a similar manner, in most, if not all, of Europe. There is no lethargy of ideas in this country. What is known to one (under the usual limits of learning) soon becomes the property of all. This is strictly true, as respects all the minor acquisitions of the school. It is also true as respects every sudden and important political event, in any quarter of the world. The former species of information is obtained through new and improved editions of their geographies, histories, and grammars, and the latter through the powerful agency of the public press. A new division of the German empire, for instance,

would be change enough to circulate a new geography through all the schools of America. Improved systems of arithmetic are as numerous as the leaves on the trees, nor is there any scarcity of annals to record the events of the day. My companion pointed out the difference between his own country and France for instance, in this particular. He has three or four young female relatives at school in the latter country. Curiosity had induced him to bring away several of the class-books that had been put into their hands, in conformity to the system which governs these matters there. In the history of France itself, the Revolution is scarcely mentioned! The reign of Napoleon is passed over in silence, and the events of 1814 and 1815 consigned to an oblivion, which does not conceal the siege of Troy. One can understand the motives of this doubtful policy; but Cadwallader pointed out defects in the geographies, which can only be accounted for on the grounds of utter indifference One example shall suffice for numberless similar instances of gross and culpable neglect, since it could not be ignorance, in a country where the science of geography is certainly as well understood as in any other part of the earth. With an excusable sensitiveness, he showed me, in a recent edition of an authorized geography, the account of his own confederation. It is said to be composed of *eighteen* States, though *twenty-one* are actually named, and *twenty-four*, in truth, existed! Even the palpable contradiction seems to have escaped the proof-readers of the work. Now this book, excessively meagre in itself, is put into the hands of the future mothers of France. Their own kingdom is certainly dealt with a little more liberally; but, though it is perhaps the highest effort of human knowledge, to know one's self, in order to a right understanding of our own character, it is absolutely necessary to have a pretty intimate acquaintance with those of other people. I speak

understandingly, when I tell you, that the geographies and modern histories which are read by the commonest American children, are vastly more minute and accurate than those read in most of the fashionable pensions of Paris.

The effect of this diffusion of common instruction is pre-eminently apparent throughout New-England, in the self-respect, decency, order, and individuality of its inhabitants. I say individuality, because, by giving ideas to a man, you impart the principles of a new existence, which supply additional motives of concern to his respectability and well-being. You are not to suppose that men become selfish by arriving nearer to a right understanding of their own natures and true interests, since all experience proves that we become humane and charitable precisely as we become conscious of our own defects, and obtain a knowledge of the means necessary to repair them. A remarkable example of this truth is to be found in New-England itself. Beyond a doubt, nowhere is to be found a population so well instructed, in elementary knowledge, as the people of these six States. It is equally true, that I have nowhere witnessed such an universality of that self-respect which preserves men from moral degradation. I very well know that in Europe, while we lend a faint attention to these statements concerning American order and prosperity, we are fond of seeking causes which shall refer their origin to circumstances peculiar to her geographical situation, and which soothe our self-love, by enabling us to predict their downfall, when the existence of European pressure shall reduce the American to the level of our own necessities. I confess, I entered the country with very similar impressions myself; but nearer observation has disturbed a theory which is generally adopted, because it is both consolatory and simple. We are apt to say that the ability of the Americans to maintain order at

so little cost of money and personal freedom, is derived from the thinness of population and the absence of want: but the American will tell you it proceeds from the high civilization of his country, which gives to every member of the community a certain interest in its quiet and character. I confess, I was a little startled to hear a people who scarcely possess a work of art that attains to mediocrity,—among whom most of the sciences are comparatively in their infancy,—who rarely push learning beyond its practical and most useful points, and who deal far less in the graces than in the more simple forms of manners, speak of their pre-eminent civilization with so evident a complacency. But there is a simple dignity in moral truths, that dims the lustre of all the meretricious gloss which art and elegance can confer on life. I fear that it is very possible to live in a gilded palace—to feast the eyes on the *beau ideal* of form and proportions,—to be an adept in the polished deceptions of conventional intercourse,—to smile when others smile, and weep when others weep,—to patronize and to court,—to cringe and to domineer, in short, to reach the *ne plus ultra* of eastern refinement, and still to have a strong flavour of barbarity about one after all. There can be no true humanity, which is the essence of all civilization, until man comes to treat and consider man as his fellow. That society can never exist, or, at least, that it could never advance, under a too fastidiously strict interpretation of this duty, needs no proof, since all incentive to exertion would be deadened in a condition where each member of the community had an equal right to participate in the general abundance. The great desideratum of the social compact would then seem to be, to produce such a state of things as shall call the most individual enterprise into action, while it should secure a proper consideration for the interests of the whole;—to avail of the talents of the gifted few, while the long train of humbler beings

shall have scope and leisure also for the privileges of their mortality: in short, to profit by the suggestions of policy, without forgetting the eternal obligations of humanity. If a union of the utmost scope to individual enterprise with the most sacred regard to the rights and feelings of the less fortunate of our species, be any evidence of an approximation to this desired condition of society, I think the inhabitant of New-England has a better right to claim an elevated state of being than any other people I have ever visited. The activity of personal efforts is every where visible on the face of the land, in their comforts, abundance, improvements, and progressive wealth, while the effect of a humanity that approaches almost to refinement, was felt at every house I entered. Let me not be misunderstood: I can readily conceive that an European gentleman, who had not been, like myself, put on his guard, would have found numberless grounds of complaint, because he was not treated as belonging to a superior class of beings by those with whom he was compelled to hold communication. Servility forms no part of the civilization of New-England, though civility be its essence. I can say with truth, that after traversing the country for near a thousand miles, in no instance did I hear or witness a rude act: not the slightest imposition was practised, or attempted, on my purse; all my inquiries were heard with patience, and answered with extraordinary intelligence: not a farthing was asked for divers extra services that were performed in my behalf; but, on the contrary, money offered in the way of *douceurs* was repeatedly declined, and that too with perfect modesty, as if it were unusual to receive rewards for trifles. My comforts and tastes, too, were uniformly consulted; and, although I often travelled in a portion of the country that was but little frequented, at every inn I met with neatness, abundance, and a manner in which a desire to oblige me was blended with a

singular respect for themselves. Nor was this rare combination of advantages at all the effect of that simplicity which is the attendant of a half-civilized condition; on the contrary, I found an intelligence that surprised me at every turn, and which, in itself, gave the true character to the humanity of which I was the subject. I repeatedly found copies of your standard English authors, in retired dwellings where one would not expect to meet any production of a cast higher than an almanac, or a horn-book; nor were they read with that acquiescent criticism which gives a fashion to taste, and which makes a joke of Moliere better than a joke of any other man. Young women (with whom my situation, no less than my tastes, oftenest brought me into literary discussions) frequently surprised me with the extent of their acquaintance with, and the soundness of their opinions concerning the merits and morality of Pope and Addison, of Young and Tillotson, and even of Milton and Shakspeare. This may sound to you ridiculous, and certainly, if taken without a saving clause for the other acquirements of my female critics, it is liable to some exception; but I repeat I have often known professed blues acquit themselves with less credit than did several of my passing acquaintances at the tea-tables of different New-England inns. I can, however, readily conceive that a traveller might pass weeks in this very portion of the country, and remain profoundly ignorant of all these things. In order to acquire information, one must possess the disposition to learn. I sought out these traits of national character, and I flatter myself that by the aid of good dispositions, and a certain something that distinguishes all of our fraternity in the presence of the softer sex, a commendable progress, in reference to the time and opportunity, was always made in their kind estimation. The great roads, as I have said, and as you well know, are rarely favourable in any country to an

accurate acquaintance with the character of its inhabitants. One may arrive at a general knowledge of the standard of honesty, disinterestedness, and civilization of a people, it is true, by mingling with them in much frequented places, for these qualities are always comparative; but he who would form an opinion of the whole by such specimens, must do it under the correction of great allowances. I believe the New-Englandman, however, has less reason than common to deprecate a general decision of this nature. A good deal of my journey was unavoidably on a great route, and though I found some inconveniences, and rather more difficulty in penetrating their domestic reserve there, than in the retired valleys of the interior, still the great distinctive features of the population were every where decidedly the same.

It is worthy of remark that nearly all of the English travellers who have written of America, pass lightly over this important section of the Union. Neither do they seem to dwell with much complacency on those adjoining states, where the habits and characteristics of New England prevail to a great extent, through the emigrants or their immediate descendants. I am taught to believe that, including the inhabitants of the six original States, not less than four millions of the American people are descended from the settlers of Plymouth, and their successors. This number is about four-tenths of the white population. If one recalls the peculiar energy and activity which distinguish these people, he may be able to form some idea of their probable influence on the character of the whole country. The distinctive habits of the Dutch, which lingered among the possessors of the adjoining province of New-York even until the commencement of the present century, have nearly disappeared before the tide of eastern emigration; and there is said to be scarcely a State in the whole con

federation which has not imbibed more or less of the impetus of its inexhaustible activity.

Suspicion might easily ascribe an unworthy motive to a silence that is so very uniform on the part of interested observers. Volumes have been written concerning the half-tenanted districts of the west, while the manners and condition of the original States, where the true effects of the American system can alone be traced, are usually disposed of in a few hurried pages. It is true there are some few of the authors in my collection, who have been more impartial in their notices, but most of them appear to have sought so eagerly for subjects of derision, as to have overlooked the more dignified materials of observation. Even the respectable Mr. Hodgson, who seems at all times ready to do justice to the Americans, has contented himself with giving some thirty or forty pages to the State of New-York, and disposes of all New-England (if the extraneous matter be deducted), Pennsylvania, New-Jersey, and Ohio, in about the same space that he has devoted to a passage through the wild regions on the Gulf of Mexico. Though the states just mentioned make but a comparatively indifferent figure on the map, they contain nearly, if not quite, half of the entire population of the country. If to this be added the fact, that in extent they cover a surface about equal to that of the kingdom of France, one may be permitted to express some surprise that they are usually treated with so little deference. An American would be very much inclined to ascribe this uniform neglect to an illiberality which found no pleasure in any description but caricature, though I think few of them would judge so harshly of the author whose name I have just mentioned. As Cadwallader expressed it, even the mistakes of such a man are entitled to be treated with respect. A much more charitable, and in the instance of Mr. Hodgson,

I am fully persuaded a more just explanation would be to ascribe this apparent partiality to the woods, rather to a love of novelty, than to any bare thirst of detraction. There is little to appease the longings of curiosity, even in the most striking characteristics of common sense: nor does a picture of the best endowed and most rational state of being, present half the attractions to our imaginations, as one in which scenes of civilization are a little coloured by the fresher and more vivid tints of a border life.

Still he who would seek the great moving principles which give no small part of its peculiar tone to the American character, must study the people of New-England deeply. It is there that he will find the germ of that tree of intelligence which has shot forth so luxuriantly, and is already shading the land with its branches, bringing forth most excellent fruits. It is there that religion, and order, and frugality, and even liberty, have taken deepest root: and no liberal American, however he may cherish some of the peculiarities of his own particular State, will deny them the meed of these high and honourable distinctions. It may be premature in one who has kept aloof from their large towns, to pronounce on the polish of a people whom he has only seen in the retirement and simplicity of the provinces. Their more southern neighbours say they are wanting in some of the nicer tact of polite intercourse, and that however they may shine in the more homely and domestic virtues, they are somewhat deficient in those of manner. I think nothing, taken with a certain limitation, to be more probable.

I saw every where the strongest evidences of a greater equality of condition than I remember ever before to have witnessed. Where this equality exists, it has an obvious tendency to bring the extremes of the community together. What the peasant gains the gentleman must in some measure lose. The

colours get intermingled, where the shades in society are so much softened. Great leisure, nay, even idleness, is perhaps necessary to exclusive attention to manner. How few, dear Waller, excel in it, even in your own aristocratic island, where it is found that a man needs no small servitude in the more graceful schools of the continent, to figure to advantage in a saloon. Perhaps there is something in the common habits of the parent and the child that is not favourable to a cultivation of the graces. Institutions which serve to give man pride in himself, sometimes lessen his respect for others: and yet I see nothing in a republican government that is at all incompatible with the highest possible refinement. It is difficult to conceive that a state of things which has a tendency to elevate the less fortunate classes of our species, should necessarily debase those whose lots have been cast in the highest. The peculiar exterior of the New-Englandman may be ascribed with more justice to the restrained and little enticing manners of his puritan ancestors. Climate, habits of thrift, and unexampled equality of rights and fortune, may have aided to perpetuate a rigid aspect. But after all, this defect in manner must, as I have already said, be taken under great limitation. Considered in reference to every class below those in which, from their pursuits and education, more refinement and tact might certainly be expected, it does not exist. On the contrary, as they are more universally intelligent than their counterparts in the most favoured European countries, so do they exhibit, in their deportment, a happier union of self-respect with consideration for others. The deficiency is oftener manifested in certain probing inquiries into the individual concerns of other people, and in a neglect of forms entirely conventional, but which by their generality have become established rules of breeding, than by any coarse or brutal transgressions of natural polite-

ness. The former liberty may indeed easily degenerate into every thing that is both repulsive and disagreeable; but there is that in the manner of a New-Englandman, when he most startles you by his familiarity, which proves he means no harm. The common, vulgar account of such questions, as "How far are you travelling, *stranger?* and where do you come from? and what may your name be?" if ever true, is now a gross caricature. The New-Englandman is too kind in all his habits to call any man *stranger.** His usual address is "friend," or sometimes he compliments a stranger of a gentlemanly appearance, with the title of "squire." I sought the least reserved intercourse that was possible with them, and in no instance was I the subject of the smallest intentional rudeness.† I say intentional, for the country physician, or lawyer, or divine (and I mingled with them all,) was ignorant that he trespassed on the rules of rigid breeding, when he made allusions, however guarded, to my individual movements or situation. Indeed I am inclined to suspect that the Americans, in all parts of the Union, are less reserved on personal subjects than we of Europe, and precisely for the reason that in general they have less to conceal. I cannot attribute a coarser motive than innocent curiosity, to the familiar habits of a people who in every other particular are so singularly tender of each other's feelings. The usage is not denied even by themselves; and a professor of one of their universities accounted for it in the following manner. The people of New-England were, and are still, intimately allied in feeling no less than in blood. Their

* Cadwallader told me that this appellation is, indeed, used in the new States to the south-west, where it is more apposite, and subsequent observation has confirmed the fact.

† It is singular that every English traveller the writer has read, in the midst of all his exaggerations, either directly or indirectly admits this fact.

enterprise early separated them from each other by wide tracts of country; and before the introduction of journals and public mails, the inhabitants must have been dependent on travellers for most of their passing intelligence. It is not difficult to conceive that, in a country where thought is so active, inquiry was not suffered to slumber. You may probably remember to have seen, when we were last at Pompeii, the little place where the townsmen were said to collect in order to glean intelligence from Upper Italy. A similar state of things must, in a greater or less degree, have existed in all civilized countries before the art of printing was known; and, in this particular, the only difference between New and Old England probably was, that as the people of the former had more ideas to appease, they were compelled to use greater exertions to attain their object. But apart from this, I will confess startling familiarity, there was a delicacy of demeanour that is surprising in a population so remote from the polish of the large towns. I have often seen the wishes of the meanest individual consulted before any trifling change was made that might be supposed to affect the comfort of all. In this species of courtesy, I think them a people unequalled. Scarcely any one, however elevated his rank, would presume to make a change in any of the dispositions of a public coach, (for I left my wagon for a time,) in a window of a hotel, or indeed in any thing in which others might have an equal concern, without a suitable deference to their wishes. And yet I have seen the glance of one woman's eye, and she of humble condition too, instantly change the unanimous decision of a dozen men.

By the hand of the fair Isabel, Waller there is something noble and touching, in the universal and yet simple and unpretending homage with which these people treat the weaker sex. I am sure a woman here has only to respect herself in order to meet

with universal deference. I now understand what Cadwallader meant when he said that America was the real Paradise of woman. The attention and manliness which he exhibited for the Abigail of the little Isabel, is common to the meanest man, at least in New-England. I traversed the country in harvest time, and scarcely recollect to have seen six females in the fields, and even they appeared there only on the emergency of some passing shower. When one considers the price which labour bears, this solitary fact is in itself pregnant with meaning. A little boy whom I conveyed with his father in my wagon a dozen miles, (for I neglected no opportunity to mix with the people,) laughed aloud as he pointed with his finger and cried, "There is a woman at work among the men!" Had he seen her riding a war-horse '*en militaire*,' he could scarcely have been more amused. After all, what nobler or more convincing proof of high civilization can be given than this habitual respect of the strong for the weak? The condition of women in this country is solely owing to the elevation of its moral feeling. As she is never misplaced in society, her influence is only felt in the channels of ordinary and domestic life.

I have heard young and silly Europeans, whose vanity has probably been wounded in finding themselves objects of secondary interest, affect to ridicule the absorbed attention which the youthful American matron bestows on her family; and some have gone so far in my presence, as to assert that a lady of this country was no more than an upper servant in the house of her husband. They pay us of the eastern hemisphere but an indifferent compliment, when they assume that this beautiful devotion to the first, the highest, and most lovely office of the sex, is peculiar to the women of station in America only. I have ever repelled the insinuation as becomes a man; but, alas! what is the testimony of one who can

point to no fireside, or household of his own, but the dreaming reverie of a heated brain? Imaginary or not, I think one might repose his affections on hundreds of the fair, artless creatures he meets with here, with an entire confidence that the world has not the first place in her thoughts. To me, woman appears to fill in America the very station for which she was designed by nature. In the lowest conditions of life she is treated with the tenderness and respect that is due to beings whom we believe to be the repositories of the better principles of our nature. Retired within the sacred precincts of her own abode, she is preserved from the destroying taint of excessive intercourse with the world. She makes no bargains beyond those which supply her own little personal wants, and her heart is not early corrupted by the baneful and unfeminine vice of selfishness; she is often the friend and adviser of her husband, but never his chapman. She must be sought in the haunts of her domestic privacy, and not amid the wranglings, deceptions, and heart-burnings of keen and sordid traffic. So true and general is this fact, that I have remarked a vast proportion of that class who frequent the markets, or vend trifles in the streets of this city, occupations that are not unsuited to the feebleness of the sex, are either foreigners, or females descended from certain insulated colonies of the Dutch, which still retain many of the habits of their ancestors amidst the improvements that are throwing them among the forgotten usages of another century.

The effect of this natural and inestimable division of employment, is in itself enough to produce an impression on the characters of a whole people. It leaves the heart and principles of woman untainted by the dire temptations of strife with her fellows The husband can retire from his own sordid struggles with the world to seek consolation and correc-

tion from one who is placed beyond their influence. The first impressions of the child are drawn from the purest sources known to our nature; and the son, even long after he has been compelled to enter on the thorny track of the father, preserves the memorial of the pure and unalloyed lessons that he has received from the lips, and, what is far better, from the example of the mother. Though in every picture of life in which these bright colours are made, the strongest must be deadened by deep and painful shadows, I do firmly believe that the undeniable truth I have just written may be applied with as much, if not with more justice, to the condition and influence of the sex in New-England as in any portion of the globe. I saw every where the utmost possible care to preserve the females from undue or unwomanly employments. If there was a burthen, it was in the arms or on the shoulders of the man. Even labours that seem properly to belong to the household, were often performed by the latter; and I never heard the voice of the wife calling on the husband for assistance, that it was not answered by a ready, manly, and cheerful compliance. The neatness of the cottage, the farm-house, and the inn; the clean, tidy, healthful, and vigorous look of the children, united to attest the usefulness of this system. What renders all this more striking and more touching, is the circumstance that not only is labour in so great demand, but, contrary to the fact in all the rest of christendom, the women materially exceed the men in numbers. This seeming departure from what is almost an established law of nature, is owing to the emigration westward. By the census of 1820, it appears, that in the six States of New-England there were rather more than thirteen females to every twelve males over the age of sixteen.

It is vain to say that absence of selfishness, and all the kinder and best feelings of man, are no more than the concomitants of abundance and simplicity, which

in themselves are the fruits of a spare population and of provincial retirement. If this be so strictly true, why do not the same qualities prevail in the more favoured regions of this very continent? why do not order, and industry, and enterprise, and all the active and healthful virtues, abound in South as in North America? why is not the fertile province of Upper Canada, for instance, as much distinguished for its advancement in all the useful arts of life as the States of the neighbouring republic? and why, under so many physical disadvantages, are the comparatively sterile and rocky States of New-England remarkable for these very qualities amid their own flourishing and healthful sisters? It cannot be the religious principles they derived from their ancestors, since the Pennsylvanian and the New-Jerseyman, and even the peaceful and honest Hollander of New-York, can claim just as virtuous a descent. It cannot be any exclusive succession to the principles and habits of their English ancestors, since, with exceptions too slight to affect the great body of the nation, this has been an inheritance common to all. It cannot be that time has matured their institutions, and given play and energy to their mental advantages, since Brazil, and Chili, and Mexico, and many other nations of this continent, date a century older, and Virginia and New-York, Canada and Louisiana, are of coëval existence. In short, it cannot even be their elastic and inciting liberty, for that too is a principle which has never been suffered to slumber in any of the vast and varied regions of this great confederation. We must seek the solution in a cause which is the parent of all that is excellent and great in communities, no less than in individuals. I mean intelligence. That pitiful and narrow theory which, thank God, is now getting into disuse in Europe, and which taught the doctrine that instruction became dangerous to those who could not push learning to its limits,

was never in fashion here. The limits of learning; As if any one could yet pronounce on the boundaries which the Almighty has been pleased to set between the efforts of our reason and his own omniscience. It is true that the wisest men are always the most truly modest; for, having outstripped their competitors in the attainment of human knowledge they alone can know how much there is necessarily beyond their reach, and how impossible it is for mortals to attain it. But who could ever yet say he had taxed his faculties to the utmost. The world has been amusing itself with assumed axioms on this subject, when it might have been better employed in investigating the truth in its more useful and practical forms. The self-sufficiency of pretenders has been tortured into an evidence of the danger of empiricism in knowledge. As well might the pedantry and foibles of the student himself be perverted to an argument against learning, as to say that thought must be kept in subjection because it sometimes leads to error. The fruits of knowledge are not to be weighed by the credit they reflect on this or that searcher after truth, but by the influence they produce on the mass of society. The man, who, from defect of powers, or from any other adverse circumstance, cannot assist in the advancement of intelligence, may, notwithstanding, become the wholesome recipient of truth; and the community which encourages a dissemination of the sacred quality, enjoys an incalculable advantage over all others, inasmuch as each of its members starts so much nearer to the goal for which every people must strive, (and that too through its individual members,) in order to secure a distinguished place in the great competition of nations.

It is a remarkable fact, that the retired, distant, and little regarded States of which I am writing, had matured and were reaping the rare fruits of a system of extended general instruction, for quite a cen-

tury, when a distinguished advocate for reform (Mr. Brougham), in the Parliament of your own country, that country which was then, and is still giving lessons to Europe in liberty and government, charmed the ears of the liberal by visions of a similar plan for yourselves, which then existed, as it now exists, only in the wishes of the truly wise and benevolent. And yet one hears of the great moral debt that the people of New owe to the people of Old England! The common ancestors may have left a goodly inheritance to their children; but on this subject, at least, it appears to me that the emigrant to the western hemisphere has made of his talent ten talents, while his kinsman, who remained at home, has done little more than imitate the example of him who met with any thing but unqualified approbation.

In reviewing my letter, I see that I have written warmly, and with a portion of that interest which the two subjects that have been its themes rarely fail to inspire. As I know you enter fully into all my feelings, both for the fair and for general instruction, (for however lame and defective may have been the policy of your nation, compared with that of your kinsmen here, there still exists in England, as in Denmark, and a few other nations, a high and noble spirit of emulation,) I shall not recall a single sentence of that which has escaped my pen. But the subject must be left, until further opportunity shall be given to look into the society of New-England in its large towns.

During the whole of my recent excursion, though I purposely avoided encountering La Fayette, his visit has been a constant and inexhaustible topic of conversation. His journey along the coast has been like the passage of a brilliant meteor. In every village he has been received with modest, but heartfelt rejoicings, while his entrances into the cities have been literally triumphant. That there have been

some exhibitions of joy which a fastidious taste might reject, cannot be denied; but you will remember that the people of this country are left to express their own sentiments in their own fashion. The surprise should be, not that the addresses and receptions of which you will doubtless see some account in Europe, are characterized by so little, but that they are distinguished by so much soundness of discrimination, truth of principle, and propriety of manner.—Adieu.

TO THE BARON VON KEMPERFELT,

&c. &c.

New-York, 1824.

I FEEL that a description of this ancient city of the United Provinces is due to you. In dwelling on its admirable position, its growing prosperity, and its probable grandeur, I wish to excite neither your hopes, nor your regrets. I have seen enough of this country already, to know, that in losing the New-Netherlands in their infancy, you only escaped the increased misfortune of having them wrested from your power by their own efforts at a more advanced period, when the struggle might have cost you, like that which England has borne, and Spain still suffers—an incalculable expenditure of men and money. You are thrice happy that your dominion in this quarter of America did not endure long enough to leave, in its train, any mortifying and exasperating recollections. The Dutch are still remembered here with a feeling strongly allied to affinity, by thousands of their descendants, who if, among their more restless and bustling compatriots of the east, they are not distinguished for the great enterprise which is pecu-

liar to that energetic population, have ever maintained the highest character for thrift, undeniable courage, and inflexible probity. These are qualities which never fail to create respect, and which, by some unfortunate construction of the human mind, as rarely excite envy as emulation.

The name of the town, itself, is far from being happy. The place stands on a long narrow island, called Manhattan, a native appellation which should have been perpetuated through that of the city. There was a precedent for innovation which might have been followed to advantage. It is a little surprising that these republicans, who are not guiltless of sundry absurd changes in their nomenclature of streets, squares, counties, and towns, should have neglected the opportunity of the Revolution, not only to deprive the royal family of England of the honour of giving a name to both their principal State and principal town, but to restore a word so sonorous, and which admits of so many happy variations as the appellation of this island. A "Manhattanese" has certainly a more poetical sound than a "New-Yorker;" and there is an euphony in the phrase of "Men of Manhattan" that the lovers of alliteration may long sigh in vain to hear equalled by any transposition of the present unmusical and complex term. Nor would the adoption of a new name be attended with half of the evils in the case of a city or a county, as in that of a street or a market, since the very notoriety and importance of the alteration would serve to apprise all men of the circumstance. But a century and a half have confirmed the present title; and while the city of the white rose has been mouldering in provincial quiet, her western god-child has been growing into an importance that is likely to carry the name to that distant period when the struggles of the adverse factions shall be lost in the obscurity of time, or be matter of vague and remote history.

A nation as commercial and active as this, has only fairly to elect the position of its favourite mart to put it on a level with the chief places of the earth. London and Paris, Vienna, Rome, Carthage, and, for any thing we know, Pekin and Nankin, can refer the causes of their greatness to little beside accident or caprice. The same might be said of hundreds more of the principal places of antiquity, or of our own times. But it is only necessary to sit down with a minute map of the country before you, to perceive, at a glance, that Nature herself has intended the island of Manhattan for the site of one of the greatest commercial towns in the world. The spirit of its possessors is not likely to balk this intention, and it may be truly said, that the agents, both physical and moral, are in the happiest possible unison to accomplish the mighty plan. Although all description must fail to give a clear idea of the advantages of such a position, yet, as your imagination may be somewhat aided by one as imperfect as that must necessarily be which comes from my pen, it shall be attempted after my own desultory and irregular manner.

You must have obtained, through my letters, some general impression concerning the two great bays which lie between New-York and the ocean. The former, you will recollect, is known by the name of "Raritan," and the latter forms what is properly called the "Harbour." Raritan Bay is an extensive roadstead, abounding with situations where vessels may be partially protected from every wind that blows. It is, in fact, only open to the sea on the east; but, by the aid of the low sandy cape I have mentioned, shelter can be had in it against the heaviest gales from that quarter, as it may also be found in some one of its many anchoring grounds, against the wind from every other point of the compass The harbour is still more secure; a vessel being en-

tirely land-locked, when anchored a mile or two within the Narrows. Here then are space and security united to an extraordinary degree; for, with the exception of a few well-defined reefs, there is scarcely a rock in the whole port to endanger a ship, or even to injure a cable. But the true basins for the loading and unloading of freights, and for the repairs and construction of vessels, are in the Hudson river, and in that narrow arm of the sea which connects the waters of the bay with those of the sound. The latter is most occupied at present by the ships engaged in foreign commerce. This strait is near half-a-mile in width, has abundance of water for any thing that floats, and possesses a moderately swift, and a sufficiently accurate current. From the point of its junction with the bay, to an island, which, by narrowing its boundaries, increases the velocity of its tides too much for the convenience of handling ships at wharfs, the distance cannot be a great deal less than five miles. The wharfs on Manhattan Island already extend more than three of these miles. On the opposite shore (Long Island) there is also a long range of quays. In the Hudson, it is impossible to fix limits to the facilities for commerce. As the river is a mile in width, and possesses great depth, it is plain that docks or wharfs may be extended as far as the necessities of the place shall ever require. The river is navigable for a heavy draught of water about a hundred miles, and for sloops and lighter craft some fifty or sixty more.

The time has not yet come for the formation of massive, permanent quays in the harbour of New-York. Wood is still too cheap, and labour too dear, for so heavy an investment of capital. All the wharfs of New-York are of very simple construction. A frame-work of hewn logs is filled with loose stone, and covered with a surface of trodden earth. This species of quay, if durability be put out of the ques-

tion, is perhaps the best in the world. The theory that wood subject to the action of tides in salt water may become the origin of disease, is, like a thousand other theories, much easier advanced than supported. It is very true that the yellow fever has often existed in the immediate vicinity of some of these wharfs; but it is quite as true that there are miles of similarly constructed quays, in precisely the same climate, where it has never existed at all. The Americans appear to trouble themselves very little on this point, for they are daily constructing great ranges of these wooden piers, in order to meet the increasing demands of their trade, while the whole of the seven miles of water which fronts the city, is lined with similar constructions, if we except the public mall, called "the Battery," which is protected from the waves of the bay by a wall of stone.

The yellow fever is certainly the only drawback on the otherwise unrivalled commercial position of New-York; but the hazard of this disease is greatly magnified in Europe. The inhabitants of the place appear to have but little dread on the subject, and past experience would seem, in a great measure, to justify their indifference. So far as I can learn, there never have been but three or four summers when that fatal malady has committed any very serious ravages in this latitude. These seasons occurred at the close of the last, and at the commencement of the present century. Since the year 1804, there have been but two autumns when the yellow fever has existed to any dangerous degree in New-York, and neither of them proved very fatal, though it is certain that the arrangements of the city were excessively inconvenienced by its appearance. I believe it is admitted by scientific men, that this dangerous malady, though it is always characterized by certain infallible symptoms, often exhibits itself under forms so very much modified as to render different treatments necessary

in different seasons. The fevers of 1819 and of 1822 in New-York, were accompanied by circumstances so singular as to deserve a particular place in this letter.

The wharfs of New-York form a succession of little basins, which are sometimes large enough to admit thirty or forty sail, though often much smaller. These irregular docks have obtained the name of "slips.' One of the former was shown me that was particularly foul and offensive. Around this slip, at the close of the hot weather in 1819, the yellow fever made its appearance. A few individuals became its victims before the existence of the danger was fully established. The city authorities took prompt and happy measures for its suppression. The question of contagion or of non-contagion had long been hotly contested among the medical men, and a sort of middle course, between the precautions inculcated by the two theories, had begun to be practised. So soon as it was found how far the disease extended, (and its limits were inconceivably small,) the inhabitants were all removed, and the streets were fenced, in order to prevent access to what was proclaimed by authority to be "the infected district." The sick were conveyed into other quarters of the town, or to the country, some dying and others recovering. When the removal was made in time, or when the disease did not make its appearance until after the patient had experienced the benefit of pure air, the malady was generally more mild, though still often fatal. No one took the disease by contagion, it being affirmed that every case that occurred could be distinctly traced to "the infected district." The taint, corruption, or animalculæ in the air, whichever the cause of the malady might be, gradually spread, until it was found necessary to extend the limits of "the infected district" in every direction. I am told that thousands remained in their dwellings, within mus-

ket-shot of this spot dedicated to death, perfectly satisfied that the enemy could make no inroads on their security without giving notice of his approach through some of those who dwelt nearest to the proscribed region. As the latter, however, acted as a sort of forlorn hope, a very respectable space was left around the fences, and, in one or two instances, especially in 1822, the disease, for want of nearer subjects, surprised a few who believed themselves sufficiently removed from its ravages. In neither year, however, did a case occur that could not be distinctly traced to "the infected district," or to a space that does not exceed one thirtieth part of the surface of the whole city. The progress of the disease was exceedingly slow, extending in a circle around the point whence it appeared to emanate. I heard several curious and well authenticated circumstances, that serve to confirm these facts, one of which I will relate.

A lady of fortune had retired to the country on the first appearance of the fever. The house she left, stood a few hundred feet beyond the limits of the "infected district." Her son had occasion to visit this dwelling, which he did without scruple, since the guardians of the city were thought to be on the alert, and hundreds were still residing between the house and the known limits of the disease. On the return of the young gentleman to the country he was seized with the fever, but happily recovered. The fortune and connexions of the youth gave notoriety to his case, and the fences were removed under the impression that the danger was spreading. After his recovery, however, Mr. —— acknowledged that, led by his curiosity, he had gone to the fence the day he was in town, where he stood for some time contemplating the solitude of the deserted streets. My informant, who could be a little waggish even on this grave subject, added, that some pretended that the

curiosity of the young gentleman was so strong as to induce him to thrust his head *through* an opening in the fence. He, however, gave credit to the story in its substance.

The malady rarely appears before the last of August, and has invariably disappeared with the first frosts, which are commonly felt here in October. The fever of 1822 caused much less alarm than that of 1819, though the infected district was far more extensive, and occupied a part of the city that was supposed to be more healthy. But experience had shown that the disorder has its limits, and that its march is slow and easily avoided. The merchants estimate the danger of the fever in this climate at a very low rate; and, perhaps, like the plague, or those fatal diseases which have ravaged London, and other towns in the centre of Europe, it will soon cease to create uneasiness at all.

I have endeavoured to glean all the interesting facts in my power concerning this disease, from men of intelligence, who have not, like the physicians, enlisted themselves in favour of one or the other of the conflicting theories of contagion or non-contagion, importation or non-importation. It appears to be admitted all round, that the disorder cannot be contracted in a pure atmosphere. If the circumstances I have heard be true, and from the authority I cannot doubt their being so, it seems also to be a nearly inevitable conclusion, that the disease is never generated in this climate. This, however, is a knotty point, and one that covers much of the grounds of disagreement. That a certain degree and concentration of heat is necessary for the appearance of the yellow fever, is a fact very generally admitted. There is a common opinion that it has never been known in New-York, except in summers when the thermometer has stood something above 80 for a given number of days in succession. And yet the tempera

ture is often as high, and for similar periods, without the appearance of the fever. The seeds of the disease are undoubtedly imported, whether it is ever generated here or not; for it has often happened that labourers who have been employed in vessels from the West Indies, after the crews had left them, have sickened and died. These cases must have arisen from a contaminated air, and not from strict contagion. Indeed there is scarce a summer in which some case of the fever does not occur at the Lazaretto, through vessels from the West Indies, or the more southern points of the United States. That the disorder does not extend itself is imputed to the pureness of the atmosphere at the time being. In a question in which important facts are liable to so much qualification, it is necessary, however, to admit their inferences with great caution. So much must depend, for instance, on the particular state of the system of the individual, that each case seems to require a close examination before any very conclusive reasoning can be grounded on its circumstances. One of the theories of the disorder, as you probably know, assumes that it is no more than a high bilious fever exhibited under a peculiarly malignant form. All this may be very true, and yet the agent to produce that malignity, may exist in the atmosphere in such a condition as to render it capable of transportation, and if I may so express it, of expansion. There is a vulgar opinion that certain vicious animalculæ are generated in the warmer climates, and when conveyed to this latitude, if they meet with a genial temperature, they thrive and propagate their species like other people, until growing bold with their numbers they wander abroad, are inhaled, and continue to poison the springs of human existence, until a day of retribution arrives in the destroying influence of a sharp frost. It is certain that the inhabitants of New-York, who would have considered their lives

in jeopardy by entering their dwellings one day, take peaceable possession of them the morning after a wholesome frost, with entire impunity. I have no doubt that much of the embarrassment under which this subject labours, is produced by the near resemblance between the fever which is certainly imported, and that which sometimes originates in the climate; though the latter, perhaps, is limited to those cases in which the patient has a strong predisposition to the malady. After all, the most exaggerated notions prevail in Europe concerning the danger of the disease in this latitude. Nine-tenths of the space covered by this city never had an original case of yellow fever in it, and its appearance at all is of rare occurrence. Indeed, I am led to believe that New-York, owing to its fine situation, is on the whole more healthy than most large towns. It has also been told to me, that the deaths by consumption, as reported, are probably greatly magnified beyond the truth, since the family physician or friend of one who has died, for instance, by excessive use of ardent liquors, would not be apt to tell the disreputable truth, especially as it is not exacted under the obligations of an oath. Though I have as yet seen no reason to believe that intemperance, particularly among the native Americans, abounds here more than in other countries, yet I can readily believe it is very fatal in its consequences in a latitude where the temperature is so high in summer. There are certainly disorders that are more or less incidental to the climate, but there are many others of a pernicious character, that are either relatively innocent, or utterly unknown. When it is remembered that, compared with the amount of the whole population, a far greater number than usual of the inhabitants of this city are of that reckless and adventurous class that regard indulgence more than life, and how easy it is to procure indulgence here, I think it will be found by the

official reports, that the city of New-York may claim a high place among the most salubrious ports of the world. This impression will be increased, when one recalls how little has as yet been done towards obtaining wholesome water, or to carry off the impurities of the place by means of drains. Still, as it is, New-York is far from being a dirty town. It has certainly degenerated from that wholesome and untiring cleanliness which it may be supposed to have inherited from its first possessors. The houses are no longer scrubbed externally, nor is it required to leave one's slippers at its gates, lest the dust of the roads should sully the brightness of glazed tiles and glaring bricks. But Paris is foul indeed, and London, in its more crowded parts, far from being cleanly, compared to New-York. And yet the commercial emporium of this nation bears no goodly reputation in this particular, among the Americans themselves. Her sister cities are said to be far more lovely, and the filth of the town is a subject of daily moanings in its own journals.

But admitting the evil in its fullest extent, it is but a trifling blot on the otherwise high pretensions of the place. Time, and a better regulated police, will serve to remedy much greater evils than this. In order to view the city in its proper light, it must be considered in connexion with those circumstances which are fast giving to it the character of the great mart of the western hemisphere.

By referring to the description already given, you will find that New-York possesses the advantages of a capacious and excellent roadstead, a vast harbour, an unusually extensive natural basin, with two outlets to the sea, and a river that, in itself, might contain all the shipping of the earth. By means of the Sound, and its tributary waters, it has the closest connexion with the adjoining State of Connecticut; and, through the ajacent bays, small vessels penetrate

in almost every direction into that of New-Jersey. These are the channels by which the town receives its ordinary daily supplies. Cadwallader pointed out on the map seven considerable navigable rivers, exclusive of the noble Hudson, and a vast number of inlets, creeks, and bays, all of which were within a hundred miles of this place, and with which daily and hourly intercourse is held by means of sloops, or steam-boats. Still these are no more than the minor and more familiar advantages of New-York, which, however they may contribute to her convenience, become insignificant when compared to the more important sources of her prosperity. It is true that in these little conveniences, Nature has done the work that man would probably have to perform a century hence, and thereby is the growth of the town greatly facilitated, but the true springs of its future grandeur must be described on a far more magnificent scale.

New-York stands central between the commerce of the north and that of the south. It is the first practicable port, at all seasons of the year, after you quit the mouth of the Chesapeake, going northward. It lies in the angle formed by the coast, and where the courses to Europe, to the West Indies, or to the Southern Atlantic, can be made direct. The ship from Virginia, or Louisiana, commonly passes within a day's sail of New-York, on its way to Europe, and the coaster from Boston frequently stops at the wharfs of this city to deposit part of its freight before proceeding further south.

Now, one so conversant with the world as yourself, need not be reminded that in every great commercial community there is a tendency to create a common mart, where exchanges can be regulated, loans effected, cargoes vended in gross, and all other things connected with trade, transacted on a scale commen-

surate to the magnitude of the interests involved in its pursuits. The natural advantages of New-York had indicated this port to the Americans for that spot, immediately after the restoration of the peace in 1783. Previously to that period, the whole proceedings of the colonies were more or less influenced by the policy of the mother country. But for a long time after the independence of the States was acknowledged, the possessors of the island of Manhattan had to contend for supremacy against a powerful rivalry. Philadelphia, distant less than a hundred miles, was not only more wealthy and more populous but for many years it enjoyed the *éclat* and advantage of being the capital of the Union. Boston and Baltimore are both seaports of extensive connexions, and of great and enlightened enterprise. Against this serious competition, however, New-York struggled with success; gradually obtaining the superiority in tonnage and inhabitants, until within a few years, when opposition silently yielded to the force of circumstances, and those towns which had so long been rivals became auxiliaries to her aggrandizement. All this is perfectly in the natural course of things, though I find that a lingering of the ancient jealousy still tempts many of the merchants of the other towns to ascribe the ascendancy of New-York to any cause but the right one. Among other things, the establishment of those numerous lines of packets, to which I have alluded in a previous letter, is thought to have had an influence on her progress. It appears to me that this is mistaking the effect for the cause. If I am rightly informed, the merchant of Boston already sends his ship here for freight; frequently sells his cargo under the hammer of the New-York auctioneer to his own neighbour, and buys a new one to send to to some distant part of the world, without seeing, from the commencement of the year to its close, the

vessel which is the instrument of transporting his wealth to the various quarters of the world. Philadelphians have been pointed out to me who are said to be employed in pursuits of the same nature. The whole mystery of these transactions rests on a principle that is within the compass of any man's understanding. Though articles can be and are sometimes vended by itinerants in its streets, the material wants of every great town are supplied in the common market-place. It is easier to find a purchaser where much than where little is sold, and it is precisely for the reason that prices take a wider range in an extensive than in a limited market, that men congregate there to feed their wants or to glut their avarice. That New-York must, in the absence of any counteracting moral causes, at some day have become this chosen mart of American commerce, is sufficiently evident by its natural advantages; and that the hour of this supremacy has arrived is, I think, apparent by the facts which I have mentioned, supported as they are by the strong corroborating circumstance, that hundreds are now daily quitting the other towns to resort to this.

The consequences of its rapid growth, and the extraordinary medley of which its population is composed, serve to give something of a peculiar character to New-York. Cadwallader tells me that, with perhaps the exception of New-Orleans, it is the only city in the Union that has not the air of a provincial town. For my own part, I have found in it such a *mélange* of customs, nations, society, and manners, all tempered, without being destroyed, by the institutions and opinions of the country, that I despair of conveying a correct idea of either by description. We shall have more definite data in speaking of its unprecedented growth.

In 1756, the city of New-York contained 13,000 souls; in 1790, 33,000; in 1800, 60,000; in 1810,

96,000; in 1820, 123,000; and, in 1825, 166,000.* The latter enumeration is exclusive of Brooklyn, a flourishing village which has arisen within the last half dozen years from next to nothing; which, from its position and connexion with the city, is in truth no more than a suburb differently governed; and which in itself contains about 10,000 souls.

By the foregoing statement, you will see that, while the growth of New-York has been rather regular than otherwise, its population has doubled within the last thirty-five years nearly at the rate of once in fifteen years. Between 1790 and 1800, the comparative increase was the greatest. This was probably owing to the fact that it was the moment when the peculiar situation of the world gave an extraordinary impulse to the American commerce. Between 1800 and 1820, were felt the effects of a highly thriving trade, the re-action of embargoes, non-intercourse and war, and the relative stagnation attendant on the return of business to its more natural channels. The extraordinary increase in the last five years, during a period of ordinary commerce, is, I think, to be imputed to the accessions obtained by the silent acquiescence of her rivals in the future supremacy of this town as the great mart of the nation. To what height, or how long this latter cause may serve to push the accumulation of New-York beyond what would be its natural growth, exceeds my ability to estimate. Though it may receive checks from the variety of causes which affect all prosperity, it will probably be some years before the influence of this revolution in opinion shall entirely cease; after which period, the growth of the city must be more regular, though always in proportion to the infant vigour of the whole country.

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* It is supposed to contain about 200,000 at the present moment

It is a curious calculation, and one in which the Americans very naturally love to indulge, to estimate the importance of this place at no very distant day. If the rate of increase for the last thirty-five years (or the whole period when the present institutions of the country have had an influence on its advancement) is to be taken as a guide for the future, the city of New-York will contain about 900,000 souls in the year 1860. Prodigious as this estimate may at first seem, it can be supported by arguments of a weight and truth of which you are most probably ignorant. Notwithstanding the buoyant character of this nation's prosperity, and the well-known fact that the growth of towns is by no means subject to the same general laws as that of countries, were it not for one circumstance, I should scarcely presume to hazard a calculation which wears the air of extravagance by its very amount, since, by merely adding another fifteen years, you have the largest town in christendom as the reward of your addition. But, in point of fact, in order to keep pace with the progress of things in this extraordinary country, something like that which elsewhere might be termed extravagance of anticipation becomes absolutely necessary. Although the ideas of my companion are reasonably regulated by an extensive acquaintance with the eastern hemisphere, I confess I have been startled with the entire gravity with which he sometimes speaks of the power of the United States; not as an event to affect the fortunes of future ages, but as a thing that would be operative in the time of our own children, dear Baron, had not our egotistical habits left us without the hope of living in those who come after us. But when he paused this morning in our promenade through the Broadway, a noble street that runs for two miles through the heart of the place, and pointed out the limits of the city, as he himself had known them in his boyhood, and then

desired me to look along the fine vista in front, which I knew was supported by vast masses of buildings on each of its sides, I felt the force of the reasons he had for entertaining opinions, that to me had just before seemed visionary.

The circumstance to which this town is to be indebted for most of its future greatness, is the immense and unprecedented range of interior which, by a bold and noble effort of policy, has recently been made tributary to its interests. By examining the map of the United States, you can easily make yourself master of all the facts necessary to a perfect understanding of what I mean. The river Hudson runs northward from New-York for the distance of about two hundred miles. It is navigable for large sloops to Waterford, a place that is situated near the junction of the Mohawk with the former river, and at a distance a little exceeding one hundred and fifty miles from this city. Sixty miles further north brings one to the head of Lake Champlain, which separates Vermont from New-York, and communicates with the St. Lawrence by means of a navigable outlet. By following the route of the Mohawk westward, you pass directly through the heart of this flourishing state, until you reach a place called Rome, whence the country to Lake Erie was found to be perfectly practicable for water communication. Once in Lake Erie, it is possible to extend a domestic trade, by means of those little inland, fresh-water seas, through a fertile and rapidly growing country, for a distance of near or quite fifteen hundred miles further. As if this were not enough, Nature has placed the head waters of the Mississippi so near the navigable tributaries of the lakes Michigan, Superior, and Erie, that there is nothing visionary in predicting that artificial communication will soon bring them into absolute contact.

It is a matter of dispute with whom the bold idea of connecting the waters of the lakes with those of the Hudson originated. The fact will probably never be known, since the thoughts of one may have been quickened by those of another, the speculations of each successor enlarging on those of him who went before, until the plaint of some Indian that nature had denied a passage to his canoe from the Mohawk into a stream of the lesser lakes, has probably given birth to them all. But there can be no question as to the individual, who, in a government so particularly cautious of its expenditures, has dared to stake his political fortunes on the success of the hazardous undertaking. Mr. Clinton, the present Governor of this State, is the only highly responsible political man who can justly lay claim to be the parent of the project. For many years, I am told, he was persecuted as a visionary projector, and it was clear that his downfall was to be the penalty of failure; though now that success is certain, or rather realized, there are hundreds ready to depreciate his merits, and not a few willing to share in all his honours. But these are no more than the detractions which are known every where to sully the brightness of a new reputation. Time will remove them all, since posterity never fails to restore with interest that portion of fame which is temporarily abstracted by the envy or the hostility of contemporaries.

The plan has been to reject the use of all the rivers, except as feeders, and to make two canals, one from the Lake Champlain, and the other from the Lake Erie, which were to meet at the junction of the Mohawk and the Hudson, whence they are to proceed to Albany, and issue into the latter river. The former of these canals is about sixty miles in length, and the other three hundred and fifty. The

work was commenced in the year 1817, and is already nearly completed.*

Really, reflection on this subject is likely to derange the ideas of the gravest man. Imagine, for instance, that Africa were a populous and civilized region; that Spain were peopled by an active and enlightened population; that their habits were highly commercial; and then assume that Gibraltar was not only one of the most noble, convenient and safe havens of the world, but that, from its central position, it had secured an ascendancy in European trade Remove all serious rivals which chance or industry had raised in the other parts of Europe, to the prosperity of this unrivalled mart, placing it already foremost among the cities of our hemisphere. Then, suppose the Mediterranean, with all its tributaries, a narrow, convenient river, having direct communication with vast lakes, whose banks were peopled by men of similar educations and opinions, wants and wishes, governed by the same policy, and subject to the same general laws, and I commit you to your own imaginative powers to fancy what the place would become in the space of a century.

With these views unavoidably before the eye, it is difficult to descend to the sober reality of existing things. I can now easily understand the perspective of American character. It is absolutely necessary to destroy thought, to repress it. I fear we owe a good

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*1823. It is now not only finished, but is so eminently successful, that it has given rise to a multitude of similar works, one of which, to connect the waters of the Ohio with Lake Erie, is already far advanced, and will open an inland water communication between New-York and New-Orleans, a distance of more than 2000 miles. The tolls on the Erie canal amounted the last year (1827) to 850,000 dollars, leaving a large surplus, after paying the interest on the money borrowed for its construction, and all charges of repairs, &c. &c.

deal of our exemption from the quality we laugh at, to the same penetrating faculty of the mind. A state of things may easily exist, in which it is quite as pleasant to look back as forward; but here, though the brief retrospect be so creditable, it absolutely sinks into insignificance compared with the mighty future. These people have clearly only to continue discreet, to be foremost among the nations of the earth, and that too, most probably, before the discussion as to their future fate shall be forgotten.

While a subject so great is intensely pressing itself on the mind, as it unavoidably must on that of every intelligent stranger who has sufficient philanthropy to regard with steadiness the prosperity of a people who may so soon be a formidable rival, it is difficult to descend to those more immaterial and evanescent customs and appearances that mark the condition of the present hour. Still they are of importance as they may influence the future, and are not without interest by their peculiarities and national characteristics.

In construction, New-York embraces every variety of house, between that of the second-rate English town-residence, and those temporary wooden tenements that are seen in the skirts of most large cities. I do not think, however, that those absolutely miserable, filthy abodes which are often seen in Europe, abound here. The houses of the poor are not indeed large, like those in which families on the continent are piled on one another for six or seven stories, but they are rarely old and tottering; for the growth of the place, which, by its insular situation, is confined to one direction, forces them out of existence before they have had time to decay. I have been told, and I think it probable, that there are not five hundred buildings in New-York, that can date further back than the peace of '83 A few old Dutch dwellings yet remain, and can easily be distinguished by their

little bricks, their gables to the street, and those steps on their battlement walls, which your countrymen are said to have invented, in order to ascend to regulate the iron weathercocks at every variation of the fickle winds.

Although poverty has no permanent abode, yet New-York has its distinct quarters. I think they are sufficiently known and understood. Commerce is gradually taking possession of the whole of the lower extremity of the island, though the bay, the battery, and the charming Broadway, still cause many of the affluent to depart with reluctance. The fashion of the place is gradually collecting on the highest and healthiest point of land, where its votaries may be equally removed from the bustle of the two rivers (for the strait is strangely enough called a river), while other portions are devoted to the labouring classes, manufacturers, and the thousand pursuits of a seaport.

In outward appearance, New-York, but for two things, would resemble a part of London that should include fair proportions of Westminster (without the great houses and recent improvements), the city, and Wapping. The points of difference are owing to the fact that, probably without an exception, the exterior of all the houses are painted, and that there is scarce a street in the place which is not more or less lined with trees. The former fashion, unquestionably derived from your countrymen, gives the town a lively and cheerful air, for which I was a long time puzzled to account. At first I imputed it to the brightness of the atmosphere, which differs but little from that of Italy; and then I thought it might be owing to the general animation and life that pervaded all the principal streets. Cadwallader explained the causes, and added, that the custom was nearly peculiar (with the exception of wooden buildings) to the towns in the ancient colony of the United Provinces. The com

mon practice is to deepen the colour of the bricks by a red paint, and then to interline them with white; a fashion, that scarcely alters their original appearance, except by imparting a neatness and freshness that are exceedingly pleasant. But, in many instances, I saw dwellings of a lively cream colour; and there are also several varieties of stone that seem to be getting much in use latterly.

The principal edifice is the City Hall, a building in which the courts are held, the city authorities assemble, and the public offices are kept. This building is oddly enough composed of two sorts of stone, which impairs its simplicity, and gives it a patched and party-coloured appearance. Neither is its *facade* in good taste, being too much in detail, a fault the ancients were not fond of committing. Notwithstanding these glaring defects, by aid of its material, a clear white marble, and the admirable atmosphere, it at first strikes one more agreeably than many a better edifice. Its rear is of a deep red, dullish freestone, and in a far better taste. It is not unlike the *facade* of the *Hotel des Monnaies* at Paris; though not quite so large, more wrought, and I think something handsomer.

The moment the rear of the City Hall was seen, I was struck with an impression of the magnificent effect which might be produced by the use of its material in Gothic architecture. It seems to me to be the precise colour that good taste would select for the style, and the stone possesses the advantage of being easily worked, and is far less fragile than the common building materials of the vicinity of Paris. While the modern Gothic is much condemned, every body appears willing to admit that it is the most imposing style for churches. I can see no reason why that which every body likes should not be done; and nothing is easier than to omit those horrible images and excrescences which we should not tolerate in the finest cathedrals of Europe, if they did not fur-

nish unequivocal evidences of the humours of the age in which they were carved.

New-York is rich in churches, if number alone be considered. I saw more than a dozen in the process of construction, and there is scarce a street of any magnitude that does not possess one. There must be at least a hundred, and there may be many more. But in a country where the state does not meddle with religion, one is not to look for much splendour in its religious edifices. Private munificence cannot equal the expenditures of a community. Besides, I am told it is a laudable practice of the rich in this country, instead of concentrating their efforts to rear up one magnificent monument of their liberality, to bestow sufficient to meet the wants of a particular parish in a style suited to its character, and then to give, freely, aid to some other congregation of their faith that may be struggling into existence, perhaps, in a distant part of the country. Indeed, instances are said to be frequent, in which affluent men contribute cheerfully and liberally to assist in the erection of churches of a persuasion different from their own. You are to recollect that a territory large as a third of Europe, has to be furnished with places of worship by a population which does not exceed that of Prussia, and that too by voluntary contributions. In estimating what has been done in America in all things, it is absolutely necessary to do justice, and for a right understanding of the case, to remember the time, the means, and the amount that was to be executed. An honest consideration of these material points can alone show the true character of the country For my own part, when I reflect on the extended division of the inhabitants, and on the absolute necessity of so much of their efforts being expended in meeting the first wants of civilized life, I am astonished to find how much they have done to embellish and improve it Under this view of the subject, though

certainly under no other, even their works of art become highly respectable. There is not much pretension to good taste in a great majority of their public edifices, nor is there much more ground to claim it in any other country, so far as modern architecture is concerned. Most of the churches in New-York are of brick, and constructed, internally, with direct reference to the comfort of the congregations, who, as you know, in most Protestant countries, remain when they once enter the temple. There are, however, some churches in this city that would make a creditable appearance any where among similar modern constructions; but it is in the number, rather than in the elegance of these buildings, that the Americans have reason to pride themselves.

Whatever you may have heard concerning neglect of religion on this side of the water, so far as the portion of the country I have seen is concerned, disbelieve. It is the language of malice and not of truth. So far as the human eye can judge, there is *at least* as much respect paid to religion in the northern and middle States, as in any part of the world I have ever visited. Were the religion of Europe to be stripped of its externals, and to lose that deference which the influence of the state and of the clergy produces, among a poor who are so dependant; in short, were man left to himself, or subject only to the impulses of public opinion, and the influence of voluntary instruction, as here, I am persuaded it would be found that there is vastly more. There is much cant, and much abuse of cant, in America, just as elsewhese; but I have been in numberless churches here; watched the people in their ingress and egress; have examined the crowd of *men* no less than of women, that followed the summons of the parish bell; and, in fine, have studied all their habits on those points which the conscience may be supposed to influence, and, taking town and country together, I should not know where to turn

to find a population more uniform in their devotions, more guarded in their discourse, or more consistent in all their practices. No stronger proof can be given of the tone of the country in respect to religion than the fact, that men who wish to stand well in popular favour are compelled to feign it at least; publis opinion producing, in this way, a far more manifest effect here than does state policy in our hemisphere. These remarks are of course only made in reference to what I have yet seen, but they may serve as a standard to compare by, when we shall come to speak of the other portions of the republic.

My paper is exhausted, and I shall refer you to the colonel, whom I know you are to meet at Palermo, for a continuation of the subject on some of those branches in which his nicer tact may find peculiar sources of interest.—Adieu.

TO THE COUNT JULES DE BÉTHIZY,

COLONEL EN RETRAITE OF THE IMPERIAL GUARD.

New-York, ———

A MAN who has revelled so often on the delicacies of Very and Robert; who has so long flourished with éclat in the saloons of the modern queen of cities; who has sickened his taste under the arches of the Coliseum, or on the heights of the Acropolis, and who must have often cast a glance at that jewel of architecture, the Bourse of Paris, as he has hurried into its din to learn the fate of his last investment in the three per cents of M. de Villele, may possibly turn with disdain from a description of the inartificial beauties of nature, a republican drawing-room, or a

mall in a commercial town of North America. But you will remember how often I have passed the bridge of Lodi in your company, (methinks I hear the whizzing of the bullets now!) how patiently I have listened to your sonnets on the mien and mind of Sophie, and how meekly I have seen you discussing the fragments of a *paté de foie gras*, without so much as begrudging you a mouthful of the unctuous morsel, though it were even the last. Presuming on this often tried, and seemingly inexhaustible patience, I shall proceed to trespass on your more elevated pursuits in the shape of one of my desultory accounts of the manners and mode of life of the grave burghers of New-York.

I may say openly to you, what consideration for the national pride of Kemperfelt may have suppressed in my letters to him, that very little of its former usages can now be traced in the ancient capital of the New-Netherlands. One hears certain sonorous names in the streets to remind him of the original colony, it is true, but with these rare memorials of the fact, and a few angular, sidelong edifices, that resemble broken fragments of prismatic ice, there is no other passing evidence of its former existence. I have elsewhere said that the city of New-York is composed of inhabitants from all the countries of christendom. Beyond a doubt, a very large majority, perhaps nine-tenths, are natives of the United States; but it is not probable that one-third who live here first saw the light on the island of Manhattan. It is computed that one in three are either natives of New-England, or are descendants of those who have emigrated from that portion of the country. To these must be added the successors of the Dutch, the English, the French, the Scotch and the Irish, and not a few who came in their proper persons from the countries occupied by these several nations. In the midst of such a mélange of customs and people,

it is exceedingly difficult to extract any thing like a definite general character. Perhaps there is none that can be given, without great allowance, to this community. Though somewhat softened, a good deal of that which is distinctive between the puritans and their brethren of the other States, is said to continue to exist for a long period after their emigration. As the former generally go to those points where they are tempted by interest, in great numbers, it is probable that they communicate quite as much, or, considering their active habits, perhaps more, of character, than they receive. With these warnings, to take all I say with due allowance, I shall proceed to my task.

To commence *ab origine*, I shall speak of the products of nature, which, if endowed with suitable capabilities, rarely fail of favour in your eyes. I know no spot of the habitable world to which the culinary sceptre is so likely to be transferred, when the art shall begin to decline in your own renowned capital, as this city. It is difficult to name fish, fowl, or beast that is not, either in its proper person, or in some species nearly allied to it, to be obtained in the markets of New-York. The exceptions that do certainly occur, are more than balanced by the animals that are peculiar to the country. Of fish alone, a gentleman here, of a spirit not uncongenial to your own, has named between seventy and eighty varieties, all of which are edible; most of which are excellent; and some of which it would be the pride of my heart to see placed within the control of your scientific skill. Of fowls there is a rare and admirable collection! I have had a list nearly, or quite as long as the catalogue of fishes placed before me, and it would do your digestive powers good to hear some of the semi-barbarous epicures of this provincial town expatiate on the merits of grouse, canvas-backs, brants, plover, wild turkeys, and all the *et cæteras* of the collection.

in respect to the more vulgar products of regular agriculture I shall say nothing. They are to be found here, as elsewhere, with the exception, that, as a great deal is still left to nature, perfection and variety in vegetables is not as much attended to as in the vicinity of older and larger places. But of the game I may speak with confidence; for, little as I have yet seen of it, at this particular season, one mouthful is sufficient to prove that there is a difference between a partridge and a hen, greater than what is demonstrated by the simple fact that one sleeps on a roost, and the other in a tree. That delicious, wild, and peculiar flavour, that we learned to prize on the frontiers of Poland, and in the woods of Norway, exists in every thing that ranges the American forest. They tell me that so very dependent is the animal on the food it eats for its flavour, that the canvas-back of the Hudson, which, in the eyes of M. de Buffon, would be precisely the same bird as that of the Chesapeake, is in truth endowed with another nature; that is to say, in all those useful purposes for which a canvas-back was beyond a doubt created. But these are still matters of faith with me, though the delicacy of the plover, the black-fish, the sheep's-head, the woodcock, and numberless other delightful inhabitants of these regions, disposes me to believe all I hear.

Of the fruits I can speak of my own knowledge. The situation of New-York is singularly felicitous in this respect. In consequence of the great range of the thermometer, there is scarce a fruit which will endure the frost that is not found in a state nearly approaching to perfection. Indeed, either owing to the freshness of the soil, or the genial influence of the sun, or to both, there is an extraordinary flavour imparted to most of the animal and vegetable food which I have tasted. Cadwallader reasons on the subject in this manner, assuming, what I believe to be true, that most of the meats, no less than the fruits, possess

this peculiar richness and delicacy of taste. He says, that in Europe the value of land is commonly so great, that the cattle are obliged to crop *all* the herbage, whereas, in America, the animal is usually allowed to make its choice, and that, too, often amid such a delicious odour of the white or natural clover of the country, as might cause even a miserable victim of the anger of Djezzar Pacha momentarily to forget his nasal dilapidation. I wish now to be understood as speaking literally, and not in those terms of exaggeration which are perhaps appropriate to the glories of a well-ordered banquet. I scarce remember any fragrance equal to that I have scented in the midst of a field of this clover. My companion tells me he was first made sensible of this peculiarity in the herbage of his native country, by remarking how comparatively devoid of scent was a field of buckwheat, by the side of which he was once walking in the centre of France. Now, buckwheat in this climate is a plant that exhales a delicious odour that is often to be scented at the distance of a quarter of a mile. In short, so far as my own observation has extended, the sun imparts a flavour to every grass, plant, or fruit here, that must be tasted, and tasted with discrimination, in order to be appreciated. Yet man has done but little to improve these inestimable advantages. There is no extraordinary show of fruits in the public market-places. Peaches, cherries, melons, and a few others of the common sorts, it is true, abound; but the Americans appear not to be disposed to make much sacrifice of time, or money, to the cultivation of the rarer sorts.

I cannot close this subject, however, without making one remark on the nature of a peculiar difference that I have noticed between the fruits of this country, and those of your own capital in particular. A French peach is juicy, and, when you first bring it in contact with your palate, sweet, but it leaves behind it a cold, watery, and almost sour taste. It is for this

reason so often eaten with sugar. An American is exceedingly apt to laugh if he sees ripe fruit of any sort eaten with any thing sweet. The peaches here leave behind a warm, rich, and delicious taste, that I can only liken in its effects to that which you call the *bouquet* of a glass of *Romanée*. You who, as a Parisian, say so much for, and think so much of, your *gôut*, may be disposed to be incredulous when I tell you these people would positively reject the best melon that ever appears on your table. There is a little one to be picked up in the markets here for a few sous, say twelve at the utmost, that exceeds any thing, of its kind, that I have ever admitted into the sanctuary of my mouth. I want terms to describe it. It is firm, and yet tender; juicy, without a particle of the cold, watery taste we know, and of an incomparable flavour and sweetness. Its equal can only be found in the Crimea, or the adjacent parts of Turkey, and perhaps of Persia. The Americans admit that it is the only melon that can appear on the table of one who understands the difference between eating and tasting, and to me it seems to have been especially created for an epicure. In the gardens of the gentlemen you find not only a greater variety, but, a few common fruits excepted, a far better quality than in the markets. I have tasted a great many old acquaintances, transplanted from the eastern to the western hemisphere, and I declare I do not remember one that has not been benefited by the change, in flavour, though not always in appearance. It is a standing joke of Cadwallader to say his countrymen consult the substance much more than the shadow, when I venture to qualify my praises by some remark on externals. I remember, however, one day he effectually silenced my criticism, by leading me to a peach-tree that grew in the shade of an adjacent building. The fruit was beautiful, exceedingly large, and without a blemish. Culling one of

the finest, I bit it, and involuntarily rejected what I had so incautiously admitted to my mouth. Then placing a peach which had grown in the open air, in my hands, my companion pointed significantly to the sun, and walked on, leaving me to reflect on an argument that was more potent than a thousand words.

And yet I have met, during my short residence in America, Europeans who have affected to rail at, or even to deny the existence of her fruits! I have always wished, on such occasions, that I could transport the products of one of the laboured gardens of our hemisphere into this, and set them to culling without a knowledge of the transfer. My life on it, their own palates would contradict their assertions in the first five minutes.

Indeed, one has only to remember that the United States extend from forty-five to twenty-five degrees of latitude, to see that Nature has placed their dominions in the very centre of her most favoured regions. There is, too, a peculiarity of climate here, which is unknown to similar parallels of latitude in Europe. The apple and the peach are found in perfection, side by side; and in such a perfection too, as, believe me, dear colonel, you must seek for the equal of the one in Italy, and that of the other, I scarcely know where.

Owing to the facility and constancy of intercourse with the Southern States, the fruits of the tropics are found here, not quite as fresh, certainly, as when first culled from the plant itself, but well flavoured, and in absolute contact with the products of the temperate zones. Pine-apples, large, rich, golden, and good, are sold from twelve to twenty-five sous; delicious oranges are hawked in the streets much cheaper than a tolerable apple can be bought in the shops of Paris, and bannanas, yams, water-melons, &c., are as common as need be in the markets. It is this extraordinary combination of the effects of different climates

the union of heat and cold, and of commercial facilities, added to the rare bounties of Nature, that incline me to think the empire of gastronomy will, sooner or later, be transferred to this spot. At present it must be confessed that the science is lamentably defective, and, after all, perhaps, it is in those places where Nature has been most liberal that man is apt to content himself, without exerting those efforts of his own, without which no perfect enjoyment in any branch of human indulgence can exist.

Passing from the means of gratification possessed by these people, we will turn our attention, for a moment, to the manner in which they are improved. The style of living of all the Americans, in the Northern States, is essentially English. As might be expected in a country where labour is comparatively high, and the fortunes, though great, still not often so princely as in the mother country, the upper classes live in a more simple form, wanting some of the most refined improvements of high English life, and yet indulging, under favour of their climate, situation and great commercial freedom, in perhaps a greater combination of luxury and comfort than any other people of the world. In respect of comfort itself, there is scarce any known in England, that is not to be found here; the point of difference is in its frequency. You are, therefore, to deduct rather in the amount of English comfort, than in its quality· and you are not to descend far below the refinements at all, since all the substantials of that comfort which makes England so remarkable in Europe, are to be found equally in America. There are points, perhaps, even in the latter, in which the Englishman (rarely very much disposed to complacency) would complain in America; and there are, certainly, others, on which the American (who has a cast of the family likeness) would boldly vent his spleen in England. I am of opinion the two nations might benefit a good

deal by a critical examination of each other. Indeed, I think the American has, and does, daily profit by his observation, though I scarce know whether his kinsman is yet disposed to admit that he can learn by the study of a people so new, so remote, and so little known, as those of the United States.

After you descend below the middle classes in society, there is no comparison to be drawn between the condition of the American and that of the native of England, or of any other place. I have seen misery here, it is true, and filth, and squalid, abject poverty, always in the cities, however; but it is rare; that is, rare indeed to what I have been accustomed to see in Europe. At first, I confess there was a feeling of disappointment came over me at seeing it at all; but reflection convinced me of the impossibility of literally bringing all men to a state in which they might profit by the advantages of their condition. Cadwallader, also, who has a silent, significant manner of conveying truths, has undeceived me more than once when I have been on the very threshold of an error. I remember that one day, while I stood contemplating, in the suburbs of this city, a scene of misery that one might not have expected to witness out of Europe, he advanced to the door of the dreary hovel I gazed at, and asked the inhabitants how long they had resided in America. The answer proved that he had not deceived himself as to the birth-place of its luckless tenants. In this manner, in more than a dozen instances, he has proved that his own country has not given birth to the vice and idleness which here could alone entail such want. In perhaps as many more instances he has passed on, shaking his head at my request that he would examine the causes, admitting frankly that he saw the subjects were natives. It is astonishing how accurate his eye is in making this distinction. I do not know that he has been deceived in a solitary in-

stance. Where misery is so rare, it is a vast deal to admit, that perhaps half of its objects are the victims of a different system than that under which it is exhibited.*

There is something exceedingly attractive in the exhibition of neatness and domestic comfort which one sees throughout this country. I think the brilliancy of the climate, the freshness of the paint, and the exterior ornaments of the houses, contribute to the charm. There is a species of second-rate, genteel houses, that abound in New-York, into which I have looked when passing, with the utmost pleasure. They have, as usual, a story that is half sunk in the earth, receiving light from an area, and two floors above. The tenants of these buildings are chiefly merchants, or professional men, in moderate circumstances, who pay rents of from 300 to 500 dollars a year. You know that no American, who is at all comfortable in life, will share his dwelling with another. Each has his own roof, and his own little yard. These buildings are finished, and exceedingly well finished too, to the attics; containing, on the

* Cadwallader related a little anecdote which goes to prove the danger of hasty conclusions. Shortly after the war, an English naval captain visited an estate of which he was the proprietor in the State of New-York. He had occasion to get his carriage repaired in a village of the interior. My friend found him railing at the addiction of the Americans to the vice of intoxication. He had been to three mechanics that morning, to hasten the work, and two of them were too drunk to execute his orders. Cadwallader demanded the names of the two delinquents; both of whom proved to be countrymen of the captain, while the only native American was a sober individual. The fact is, the poor of Europe, when they find themselves transplanted into the abundance of America, are exceedingly apt to abuse the advantage. The Scotch, the Swiss, the French, and the Germans, are said to be the most prudent, and the Irish and the English the most indiscreet. With the latter it often happens that the vice we speak of is the actual cause of their emigration

average, six rooms, besides offices, and servants apartments. The furniture of these houses is often elegant, and always neat. Mahogany abounds here, and is commonly used for all the principal articles, and very frequently for doors, railings of stairs, &c. &c. Indeed, the whole world contributes to their luxury. French clocks, English and Brussels carpets, curtains from Lyons, and the Indies, alabaster from France and Italy, marble of their own, and from Italy, and, in short, every ornament below the rarest that is known in every other country in christendom, and frequently out of it, is put within the reach of the American of moderate means, by the facilities of their trade. In that classical taste which has been so happily communicated to your French artisans, their own are, without doubt, miserably deficient; but they are good imitators, and there is no scarcity of models. While, in consequence of want of taste or want of wealth, the Americans possess, in very few instances, any one of the articles that contribute to the grace of life in the same perfection as they are known in some one other country, they enjoy, by means of their unfettered trade, a combination of the same species of luxuries, in a less advanced state, that is found nowhere else. They often, nay, almost always, fail in the particular excellence, but they possess an aggregate of approximate perfection that is unrivalled, perhaps, even in England; certainly if we descend below the very highest classes in the latter country.

But there are hundreds, I believe I might almost say a thousand, houses in New-York of pretensions altogether superior to those just named. A particular description of one belonging to a friend of Cadwallader, by whose favour I was permitted to examine it, may serve to give you an idea of the whole of its class. The proprietor is a gentleman of the first society of the country, and of what is here called an easy for-

tune, though hundreds of his neighbours enjoy the goods of this world in a far greater degree than himself.

The dwelling of Mr. ——— is on the Broadway, one of the principal streets, that runs on the height of land along the centre of the island, for the distance of about two miles. It is the fashionable mall of the city, and certainly, for gaiety, the beauty and grace of the beings who throng it, and, above all, the glorious sun that seems to reign here three days out of four, it may safely challenge competition with most if not any of the promenades of the old world. The house in question occupies, I should think, a front of about thirty-four feet on the Broadway, and extends into the rear between sixty and seventy more. There are no additions, the building ascending from the ground to its attics in the same proportions. The exterior necessarily presents a narrow, ill-arranged façade, that puts architectural beauty a good deal at defiance. The most that can be done with such a front is to abstain from inappropriate ornament, and to aim at such an effect as shall convey a proper idea of the more substantial comforts, and of the neatness that predominate within. The building is of bricks. painted and lined, as already described, and modestly ornamented, in a very good taste, with caps, sills, cornices, &c. &c. in the dark red freestone of the country. The house is of four stories; the lower, or *rez de chaussée*, being half sunk, as is very usual, below the surface of the ground, and the three upper possessing elevations well proportioned to the height of the edifice. The door is at one of the corners of the front, and is nearly on a level with the windows of the first floor, which may commence at the distance of about a dozen feet above the pavement of the street. To reach this door, it is necessary to mount a flight of steep, inconvenient steps, also in freestone, which compensate, in a slight degree, for the pain of

the ascent, (neither of us, colonel, is as young now as the day you crossed the bridge of Lodi,) by their admirable neatness, and the perfect order of their iron rails and glittering brass ornaments. The entrance is into a little vestibule, which may be some twelve feet long, by eight in width. This apartment is entirely unfurnished, and appears only constructed to shelter visiters while the servant is approaching to admit them through the inner door. The general excellence of the climate, and, perhaps, the customs of the country, have, as yet, prevented the Americans from providing a proper place for the reception of the servants of their guests: they rarely wait, unless during the short calls, and then it is always in the street. As visiters are never announced, and as but one family occupies the same building, there is little occasion, unless to assist in unrobing, for a servant to attend his master, or mistress, within the outer door. From the vestibule the entrance is into a long, narrow, high, and handsome corridor, at the farther extremity of which are the principal stairs. This corridor, or passage, as it is called here, is carpeted, lighted with a handsome lamp, has a table, and a few chairs; and, in short, is just as unlike a French corridor as any thing of the sort can very well be. From this passage you enter the rooms on the first floor; you ascend to the upper, and descend to the lower story, and you have egress from and ingress to the house by its front and rear. The first floor is occupied by two rooms that communicate by double doors. These apartments are of nearly equal size, and, subtracting the space occupied by the passage, and two little china closets, that partially separate them, they cover the whole area of the house. Each room is lighted by two windows; is sufficiently high; has stuccoed ceiling, and cornices in white; hangings of light, airy, French paper; curtains in silk and in muslin; mantel-pieces of carved figures in white

marble (Italian in manufacture, I should think;) Brussels carpets; large mirrors; chairs, sofas, and tables, in mahogany; chandeliers; beautiful, neat, and highly wrought grates in the fire-places of home work; candelabras, lustres, &c. &c., much as one sees them all over Europe. In one of the rooms, however, is a spacious, heavy, ill-looking side-board, in mahogany, groaning with plate, knife and spoon cases, all handsome enough, I allow, but sadly out of place where they are seen. Here is the first great defect that I find in the ordering of American domestic economy. The eating, or dining-room, is almost invariably one of the best in the house. The custom is certainly of English origin, and takes it rise in the habit of sitting an hour or two after the cloth is removed, picking nuts, drinking wine, chatting, yawning, and gazing about the apartment. The first great improvement to be made in the household of these people is to substitute taste for prodigality in their tables; and the second, I think, will be to choose an apartment for their meals, that shall be convenient to the offices, suited to the habits of the family, plain in its ornaments, and removed from the ordinary occupations of those who are to enjoy it. In some houses this is already partially effected; but, as a rule, I am persuaded that the American guest, who should find himself introduced into a *salle à manger* as plain as that in which a French duke usually takes his repast, would not think his host a man who sufficiently understood the fitness of things. I have heard it said, that the occupant of the White House* gives his dinners in one of these plain rooms, and that the meanness of Congress is much laughed at because they do not order one better furnished for him. Certes if Congress never showed a worse taste than this, they might safely challenge criticism. As the President, or his

* The President of the United States.

wife, directs these matters, I suppose, however, the great national council is altogether innocent of the innovation.

You ascend, by means of the stairs at the end of the passage, into what is here called the second story, but which, from the equivocal character of the basement, it is difficult to name correctly. This ascent is necessarily narrow, crowded, and inconvenient. The beautiful railings in mahogany and brass, and the admirable neatness of every part of an American house of any pretension, would serve to reconcile one to a thousand defects. As respects this cardinal point, I think there is little difference between the English and the Americans, at least, so far as I have yet seen the latter; but the glorious sun of this climate illumines every thing to such a degree, as to lend a quality of brightness that is rarely known in Britain. You know that a diamond will hardly glitter in London. It must also be remembered that an American house is kept in this order by the aid of perhaps one third of the domestics that would be employed in the mother country.

On the second floor (or perhaps you will get a better idea if I call it the first) of the house of Mr. ——, there is a spacious saloon, which occupies the whole width of the building, and possesses a corresponding breadth. This apartment, being exclusively that of the mistress of the mansion, is furnished with rather more delicacy than those below. The curtains are in blue India damask, the chairs and sofa of the same coloured silk, and other things are made to correspond. The library of the husband is on the same floor, and between the two there is a room used as a bed-chamber. The third story is appropriated to the sleeping-rooms of the family; the attic to the same purpose for the servants, and the basement contains a nursery and the usual offices. The whole building is finished with great neatness, and with a

solidity and accuracy of workmanship that it is rare to meet in Europe, out of England. The doors of the better rooms are of massive mahogany, and wherever wood is employed, it is used with great taste and skill. All the mantel-pieces are marble, all the floors are carpeted, and all the walls are finished in a firm, smooth cement.

I have been thus minute in my account, because in describing the house of Mr. ——, I am persuaded that I convey a general idea of those of all of the upper classes in the northern section of this country. There are, certainly, much larger and more pretending buildings than his in New-York, and many far richer and more highly wrought; but this is the habitation of an American in the very best society, who is in easy circumstances, of extensive and high connexions, and who receives a fair proportion of his acquaintances. By extending the building a little, adding something to the richness of the furniture, and now and then going as far as two or three cabinet pictures, you will embrace the establishments of the most affluent; and by curtailing the whole, perhaps, to the same degree, you will include an immense majority of all that part of the community who can lay claim to belong to the class of *les gens comme il faut*. It is here, as elsewhere, a fact that the parvenus are commonly the most lavish in their expenditures, either because money is a novelty, or, what is more probably the case, because they find it necessary to purchase consideration by its liberal use. We will now quit this dwelling, in which I am fond of acknowledging that I have been received with the most kind and polished hospitality, by its execrable flight of steps, and descend into the street.

The New-Yorkers (how much better is the word Manhattanese!) cherish the clumsy inconvenient entrances, I believe, as heir-looms of their Dutch progenitors. They are called "stoops," a word of whose

derivation I am ignorant, though that may be of Holland too, and they are found disfiguring the architecture, cumbering the side-walks, and endangering the human neck, attached to the front doors of more than two thirds of the dwellings of this city. A better taste is, however, gradually making its way, and houses with regular basements are seen, in which the occupants can ascend to their apartments without encountering the dangers that in winter must frequently equal those of an ascent to the summit of Mont Blanc.

You will see, by the foregoing description, that the family of an American gentleman in town, though not always so conveniently, is on the whole about as well lodged as the great majority of the similar class in your own country. The house of Mr. ——— contains, including three capacious saloons, ten considerable rooms, besides offices, and servants' chambers. The deficiency is in the dining-room, in the inconvenience of the narrow stairs, and in the bad division of the principal apartments on the different floors; a fault that arises from the original construction of the building. Though the ornaments are in general more simple, the Americans have in very many things a great advantage. Profiting by their nearly unshackled commerce, they import any thing they choose, and adopt, or reject its use, as fancy dictates. Almost every article of foreign industry can be purchased here at a very small advance on the original cost, and in many instances even cheaper. Competition is so active, and information so universal, and so rapidly imparted, that a monopoly can hardly exist for a week, and a glut is far more common than a scarcity

You will also see by what I have written, that the Americans have not yet adopted a style of architecture of their own. Their houses are still essentially English, though neither the winters nor the summers of their climate would seem to recommend them.

There is, however, something in the opposite characters of the two seasons, to render a choice difficult. A people in whose country the heats of Florence and the colds of St. Petersburg periodically prevail, may well hesitate between a marble fountain and a Russian stove. I am not certain that, considering their pursuits, and the peculiarity of climate, they are very wrong in their present habits. But I shall for ever protest against the use of carpets, while the thermometer is at 90°, nor shall I soon cease to declaim against those hideous excrescences called "stoops." Beautiful, fragrant, and cool India mats, are, notwithstanding, much in use in midsummer, in the better houses. Still, with all my efforts, I have not been able to find a room to sleep in, that it is not fortified with a Brussels, or a double English ingrain. The perspiration stands on my forehead while I write of them! Another defect in the American establishments is the want of *cabinets de toilette.* They are certainly to be found in a few houses, but I have occupied a bed-room five and twenty feet square, in a house, otherwise convenient, that had not under its roof a single apartment of the sort. This is truly a sad prodigality of room, though space be unquestionably so very desirable in a warm climate.

I should think about the same proportion of the inhabitants keep carriages here as in France. But the ordinary coaches of the stands in New-York are quite as good, and often far better than those *voitures de remise* that one usually gets by the day in Paris. There is even a still better class of coaches to be ordered by the day, or hour, from the stables, which are much used by the inhabitants. The equipages of this city, with the exception of liveries, and heraldic blazonries, are very much like those of your own mighty capital. When I first landed, coming as I did from England, I thought the coaches so exceedingly light as to be mean; but, too experienced a

traveller to be precipitate, I waited for the old impressions to lose a little of their influence before an opinion was formed, and in a short time I came to see their beauties. Cadwallader told me that when he first arrived in England, he was amazed at the clumsiness of the English vehicles, but that time, by rendering them familiar, soon changed his opinion. We went together lately to examine a coach from London, which its owner had abandoned, either in distaste, or because he found it unsuited to the country, and really it was calculated to renew all the original opinions of my friend. I have heard of an American who carried to England one of the light vehicles of his country, and after it had arrived, he was positively ashamed to exhibit it among its ponderous rivals. In this manner do we all become the subjects of a capricious and varying taste that is miserably dependent on habit; a fact, simple as it is, which might teach moderation and modesty to all young travellers, and rather less dogmatism than is commonly found among some that are older.—Adieu.

TO THE COMTE JULES DE BÉTHIZY,

&c. &c.

New-York,———

It may be premature to pretend to speak with any certainty concerning the true state of ordinary American society. My opinions have already undergone two or three revolutions on the subject, for it is so easy, where no acknowledged distinctions prevail, for a stranger to glide imperceptibly from one circle to another, that the impressions they leave are very apt

to be confounded. I have never yet conversed with any declaimer on the bad tone of republican manners (and they are not wanting), who has not been ready enough to confess this, or that, individual an eminent exception. Now, it never appears to enter into the heads of these Chesterfieldian critics that the very individuals in question are so many members of a great class, that very well know how to marshal themselves in their ordinary intercourse with each other, although, to a stranger, they may seem no more than insulated exceptions, floating, as it were by accident, on the bosom of a motley, and frequently far from inviting state of society. I think, however, that it is not difficult to see, at a glance, that even the best bred people here maintain their intercourse among each other, under far fewer artificial forms than are to be found in almost any other country. Simplicity of deportment is usually the concomitant of good sense every where; but, in America, it is particularly in good taste. It would be a gratuitous weakness in a people who have boldly denounced the dominion of courts, to descend to imitate the cumbrous forms which are perhaps necessary to their existence, and which so insensibly become disseminated, in mawkish imitations, among those who live in their purlieus. Direct in their thoughts, above the necessity of any systematic counterfeiting, and in almost every instance, secure of the ordinary means of existence, it is quite in nature that the American, in his daily communications, should consult the truth more, and conventional deception less, than those who are fettered and restrained by the thousand pressures of a highly artificial state of being. The boasted refinement of the most polished court in Europe is, after all, no more than expertness in a practice, which the Persian, with his semi-barbarous education, understands better than the veriest courtier of them all. That rare and lofty courtesy, in which

the party knows how to respect himself, by sacrificing no principle while he reconciles his companion to the stern character of his morals by grace of mien and charity to his weaknesses, is, I think, quite as common here as we are wont to find it in Europe. In respect to those purely conventional forms, that receive value only from their use, and which are so highly prized by weak minds, because so completely within their reach, and which even become familiar to strong ones from an indisposition to dispute their sway, are in no great favour here. Perhaps the circumstance that people of education, fortune, connexions, and, of course, of similar turn of mind, are so much separated by the peculiarity of the State governments, into the coteries of twenty capital towns instead of those of one, is the chief reason that they are neglected; for all experience proves that fashion is a folly which merely needs soil to take deep root. Indeed I am not sure that this species of exotic will not, at some future day, luxuriate in America to a greater degree, than it even thrives in the fertile regions of the east. It is certain, that in England, the country most resembling this, fashionable society is more trammelled by fictitious forms, both of speech and deportment, than in any other European nation. Every where else, after certain sacrifices are made to deception and the self-love of second persons, the actor is left to play his part at the instigations of nature; but in England there is a fashion for drinking a glass of wine, for pronouncing, and *mis*pronouncing a word, for even perverting its meaning, for being polite, and what is still more strange, sometimes for being rude and vulgar. Any one who has lived twenty years, may recall a multitude of changes that have occurred in the most cherished usages of what is called good-breeding. Now, there must be a reason for all this whimsical absurdity. Is it not owing to the peculiarly vacillating nature of her aris-

tocracy? In a country where wealth is constantly bringing new claimants for consideration into the arena of fashion, (for it is, after all, no more than a struggle for notoriety, that may be more bloodless, but is not less bitter than that of the gladiators,) those who are in its possession contrive all possible means of distinction between themselves and those who are about to dispute their ascendancy. Beyond a doubt what is called high English society, is more repulsive, artificial and cumbered, and, in short, more absurd and frequently less graceful than that of any other European nation. Still the English are a rational, sound, highly reasoning, manly and enlightened people. It is difficult to account for the inconsistency, but by believing that the struggle for supremacy gives birth to every species of high-bred folly, among which is to be numbered no small portion of customs that would be more honoured in the breach than in the observance.

If like causes are always to produce like effects, the day may come when the same reasons shall induce the American fashionables of two generations to lead the fashionables of one, a similar wild-goose chase in quest of the *ne plus ultra* of elegance. As the fact now stands, the accessions to the *coteries* are so very numerous, and are commonly made with strides so rapid, that it is as yet, fortunately, more likely to give distinction to be rationally polite, than genteelly vulgar.

Of one truth, however, I am firmly persuaded, that nineteen out of twenty of the strangers who visit this country, can give no correct analysis of the manners which prevail in the different circles that divide this, like all other great communities. The pursuits and the inclinations of the men bring them much oftener together than those of the women. It is therefore among the females that the nicer and more delicate shades of distinction are to be sought. The very prev-

alent notion of Europe, that society must, of necessity, exist, in a pure democracy, on terms of promiscuous association, is too manifestly absurd to need any contradiction with one who knows life as well as yourself.

It would require the magical power which that renowned philanthropist, Mr. Owen, ascribes to his system, to destroy the influence of education, talents, money, or even of birth. They all, in fact, exist in America, just as they do with us, only modified, and in some degree curtailed.

You may perhaps be startled to hear of distinction conferred by birth among a people whose laws deny it a single privilege or immunity. Even thousands of Americans themselves, who have scarcely descended into their own system farther than is absolutely requisite to acquire its general maxims, will stoutly maintain that it has no reality. I remember to have heard one of these generalizers characterize the folly of a young acquaintance by saying, with peculiar bitterness of tone, "he presumes on his being the son of ———." Now, if some portion of the consideration of the father were not transmissible to the descendant, the latter clearly could in no degree presume on his birth. It is fortunate here, as elsewhere, to be the child of a worthy, or even of an affluent parent. The goods of the latter descend, by process of law, to the offspring, and, by aid of public opinion, the son receives some portion of the renown that has been earned by the merit of the father. It is useless to dwell on those secret and deep-rooted feelings by which man, in all ages, and under every circumstance, has been willing to permit this hereditary reflection of character, in order to prove that human nature must have sway in the republics of North America, as in the monarchies of the east. A thousand examples might be quoted to show that the influence of this sentiment of birth, (just so far as it is a *sentiment* and not a *prejudice*,)

is not only felt by the people, but is openly acknowledged by the government of the country in its practices. Unless I am grossly misinformed, the relative of one who had served the state, for instance, would, *cæteris paribus*, prevail in an application for the public favour, over a competitor who could urge no such additional claim; and the reason of the decision would be deemed satisfactory by the nation. No one would be hardy enough to deny, that, had Washington left a child, he would have passed through society, or even before the public, on a perfect equality with men similarly endowed, though not similarly born. Just as this hereditary advantage would be true in the case of a son of Washington, it is true, with a lessened effect, in those of other men. It would be a weak and a vain, because an impracticable and an unwise attempt, in any people, to reject so sweet an incentive to virtue on the part of the parent, or so noble a motive of emulation on that of the child. It is enough for the most democratic opinions, that the feeling should be kept within the limits of reason. The community, in a government trammelled by so few factitious forms, always holds in its own power a sufficient check on the abuse of the privilege; and here, in fact, is to be found the true point of distinction, not only between the governments of this and other countries, but between the conditions of their ordinary society also. In America, while the claims of individuals are admitted, it is easy to satisfy, to weaken, or to lose them. It is not enough simply to be the son of a great man; in order to render it of essential advantage, some portion of his merit must become hereditary, or the claim had better be suppressed. Even an honourable name may become matter of reproach, since, when the public esteem is once forfeited, the recollection of the ancestor only serves to heighten the demerit of his delinquent child. There is no privileged rank under which he can

stalk abroad and flout at the morals, or offend the honesty of men better than himself, and the councils of the nation are for ever hermetically sealed against his entrance.

In society, the punishment of this unworthiness, though necessarily less imposing, is scarcely less direct and salutary. Nothing is easier than for a member of any circle to forfeit the privileges of caste. It is a fact highly creditable to the morals of this people, unless close observation and the opinions of Cadwallader greatly mislead me, that a circle confessedly inferior will not receive an outcast from one above it. The great qualifications for all are, in moral essentials, the same. It is not pretended that all men, or even all women, in the United States, are exemplary in their habits, or that they live in a state of entire innocence, compared with that of their fellow-mortals elsewhere; but there is not a doubt that the tone of manners here requires the utmost seemliness of deportment; that suspicion even may become dangerous to a man, and is almost always fatal to a woman; and that as access to the circles is effected with less difficulty than with us, so is the path of egress much more readily to be found.

There is a very summary way of accounting for these things, by saying that all this is no more than the result of a simple state of society, and that in the absence of luxury, and especially in a country where the population is scattered, the result is precisely that which was to be expected. Why then is not the tone of manners as high in South as in North America, or why are the moralists in the cities quite as fastidious, or even more so, than those on the most remote borders? The truth is, that neither the polity nor the manners of the Americans bear that recent origin we are wont to give them. Both have substantially endured the test of two centuries; and though they are becoming meliorated and more accommodating by

time, it is idle to say that they are merely the experiments of the hour. Nor is it very safe to ascribe any quality, good or bad, to the Americans on account of their being removed from the temptations of luxury. That they have abstained from excessive indulgence, is more the effect of taste or principle, than of necessity. I have never yet visited any country where luxuries were so completely within the reach of the majority. It is true that their manners are not exposed to the temptations of courts; but it is equally true that they have deliberately rejected the use of such a form of government as renders them necessary.

Before leaving this subject I must explain a little, or what I have already written may possibly lead you into error. The influence of birth, though undoubted, is not to be understood as existing here in any thing like the extent, or even under the same forms, as in Europe.* The very nation, which, in tenderness to the father, might be disposed to accord a certain deference to the child who had received his early impressions under such a man as Washington, would be very apt to turn a cold and displeased eye on the follies or vices of a more distant descendant. You may be prepared to answer, 'all this reads well, but we will wait the effects of time on a system that pretends to elevate itself above the established prejudices

* We have the authority of a great contemporary (the biographer of Napoleon) for believing that the science of heraldry reverses the inferences of reason, by shedding more lustre on the remote descendant than on the founder of an illustrious name. This is, at the best, but an equivocal acknowledgment, and it is undeniably far too sublimated for the straight-going common sense of the Americans. The writer is inclined to believe that the very opposite ground is maintained by the proficients in American heraldry, or, in other words, that the great man himself is thought to be the greatest man of his family, and that the reflection of his talents, probity, courage, or for whatever quality he may have been most remarkable, is thought to shed most lustre on those of his offspring who have lived nearest to its influence.

of the rest of the world.' But in what is reason weaker than prejudice, after its conclusions have been confirmed by practice? I repeat, these people are not experimenting, but living in conformity to usages, and under institutions that have already been subject to the trials of two hundred years. So far as I can learn, instead of imperceptibly falling into the train of European ideas, they have rather been silently receding; and if there has been the least approximation between the opinions of the two hemispheres on these subjects, the change has been wrought among ourselves. While travelling in the interior of New-England, an honest looking farmer endeavoured to read the blazonry that, by the negligence of a servant, had been suffered to remain on the plate of one of my travelling cases. I endeavoured to solve the difficulties of the good man by explaining the use and meaning of the arms. No sooner did the American find that I was disposed to humour his curiosity, than he asked several home questions, that, it must be confessed, were not without their embarrassment. It was necessary finally to tell him that these were distinctions that had been conferred by different sovereigns on the ancestors of the owner of the case. "If there is no harm in't, may I ask for what?" "For their courage in battle, and devotion to their princes." The worthy republican regarded the plate for some time intently; and then bluntly inquired "if this was all the reward they had received?" As it was useless to contend against the prejudices of an ignorant man, a retreat was effected as soon as convenient.*

* The simplicity which one finds on these subjects in America, is often not without amusement. The general use of books, and the multitude of journals in the United States, certainly prevent the inhabitants of the country from being as ignorant of the usages of Europe, as the people of Europe, even of the better classes, are commonly of them; still there are thousands who

Notwithstanding these instances of ignorance, the mass of the people are surprisingly familiar with the divisions of a society that is so different from their own. While alluding to armorial bearings, it may be well to add, that I saw a great number, emblazoned in different materials, suspended from the walls of the dwellings, especially in New-England. They are frequently seen on carriages, and perhaps oftener still on watch-seals. My travelling companion was asked to explain why these evidences of an aristocratical feeling were seen among a people so thoroughly democratic. The substance of his answer shall be given: "Though the Americans do not always venerate their ancestors, for precisely the same reasons as are acknowledged in Europe, they are nevertheless descended from the same sort of progenitors. Those who emigrated to this hemisphere, brought with them most of the opinions of the old world. Such of them as bore coats of arms did not forget the distinction, and those that you see are the relics of times long since past. They have not been disposed of, for no other reason that I can discover, than because it is difficult to find a use for them. Most of the trinkets are heir-looms; though many individuals find a personal convenience in the use of seals which are appropriate to themselves. There are others who openly adopt arms for the sake of this convenience, sometimes rejecting those which have long been used by their families, simply because they are not sufficiently exclusive; and there are cer-

form droll opinions on the subject of our distinctive habits. A German prince of the family of Saxe Weimar, was travelling in the United States during the visit of the writer. He made himself acceptable every where, by his simplicity and good sense. A little crowd had collected round an inn where he had stopped, and a new comer inquired of one of his acquaintance, "why he stared at the big man in the piazza?" "Oh, for nothing at all, only they say he is a Duke!" "A Duke! I wonder what he does for a living?"

tainly some who are willing to creep under the man tle of gentility at so cheap a rate. Foreigners, when they see these exhibitions, and find self-established heralds in the shape of seal-cutters, &c. in the country sometimes believe that wealth is gradually producing a change in the manners of the people to the prejudice of democracy. But they fall into an egregious error The fact is, that even this innocent, though perhaps absurd vanity, is getting rapidly into disuse, together with most of the other distinctive usages of orders in society, that are not purely connected with character and deportment. No one, for instance, thinks now of exhibiting the arms on any portion of the dwelling, in hatchments, or on tombstones, though all were practised openly within thirty years. Liveries are scarcely so frequent now as formerly, while coaches, coachmen, and footmen are multiplied fifty-fold. In short, the whole country, not only in its government, but in all its habits, is daily getting to be more purely democratic, instead of making the smallest approaches to the opposite extreme. I state this merely as a fact that any well-informed American will corroborate, leaving you to your own reasoning and inferences."

It is a peculiar feature of American democracy, and it is one which marks its ancient date and its entire security, that it is unaccompanied by any jealousy of aristocracy beyond that which distinguishes the usual rancour of personal envy. One may sometimes hear remarks that denote the sourness of an unsuccessful rivalry, but the feeling can nowhere be traced in the conduct of the nation. The little States of Connecticut and Rhode Island contain, beyond a doubt, the two most purely democratic communities in the civilized world. In both, the public will is obeyed with the submission that a despot would exact; and, in the latter, it is consulted to a minuteness of detail that would be inconvenient, if not impracticable, in a community of more extended

interests. Now, mark one effect of this excessive democracy which you may not be prepared to expect. No less than three governors of Connecticut have been named to me, who, in due progress of time, and at suitable ages, have been selected to sit in the chair which their fathers had filled with credit. Many inferior offices also exist, which, were it not for the annual decision of the people, might be thought to have become hereditary in certain families.* Here is proof that the sovereign people can be as stable in their will, as the will of any other sovereign. Of the five Presidents who have filled the chair, since the adoption of the present constitution in 1789, but one has left a son. That son is now a candidate for the same high office; and though the circumstance, amid a thousand other absurdities, is sometimes urged against his election, it is plain there is not a man in the whole nation who deems it of the least importance.†

As might be expected, the general society of New-York bears a strong impression of its commercial character. In consequence of the rapid growth of the city, the number of families that may be properly classed among those which have long been distinguished in its history for their wealth and importance, bears a much smaller proportion to its entire population than that of most other places. A great many of the principal personages were swept away by the Revolution. Under these constant and progressive changes, as might be expected, the influence of their manners is, I think, less perceptible than, for instance, in Philadelphia. Still, a much larger class of what in Europe forms the *élite* of so-

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* The writer was assured that the office of Secretary of State, in Rhode Island, had been in one family for near seventy years.

† Mr. John Quincy Adams he was chosen the following winter, and is no v President.

ciety exists here, than strangers commonly suppose My letters first threw me, as a matter of course, among the mercantile men; and I found that mixture of manners, information, and character, that distinguishes the class every where. It was my lot frequently to occupy a seat at a banquet between some fine, spirited, intelligent individual, whose mind and manners had been improved by travel and education, and, perhaps, another votary of Plutus, (one hardly dare say of Mercury, in this stage of the world,) whose ideas were never above the level of a sordid calculation, and all of whose calculations were as egotistical as his discourse. It strikes me that both a higher and a lower order of men mingle in commerce here, than is seen elsewhere, if, perhaps, the better sort of English merchants be excepted. Their intimate relations on "'Change" bring them all, more or less, together in the saloons; nor can the associations well be avoided, until the place shall attain a size, which must leave every one the perfect master of his own manner of living. That hour is fast approaching for New-York, and with it, I think, must come a corresponding change in the marshalling of its coteries.

When Cadwallader returned from the country, I fell into a very different circle. His connexions were strictly of New-York, and they were altogether among the principal and longest established families. Here I met with many men of great leisure and large fortunes, who had imparted to their children what they had received from their fathers; and it would not have been easy, after making some slight allowances for a trifling tinge of Dutch customs, to have distinguished between their society and that portion of the English who live in great abundance, without falling into the current of what is called high or fashionable life. Although many, not only of the best informed, but of the best bred of the Americans, are merchants, the tone of manners in this circle was decidedly more

even and graceful than in that which strictly belongs to the former. But it is not difficult to see that society in New-York, in consequence of its extraordinary increase, is rather in a state of effervescence than settled, and, where that is the case, I presume you will not be surprised to know, that the lees sometimes get nearer to the surface than is desirable. Nothing is easier than for a well-behaved man, who is tolerably recommended, to get admission into the houses of the larger proportion of those who seek notoriety by courting a general intercourse; but I am inclined to think that the doors of those who are secure of their stations are guarded with the customary watchfulness. Still you will always remember, that suspicion is less alert than in Europe; for where temptations to abuse confidence are so rare, one is not much disposed to clog the enjoyments of life by admitting so sullen a guest. The effect of this general confidence is a less restrained and more natural communication.

There is a common accusation against the Americans, men and women, of being cold in their manners. Some carry their distaste of the alleged defect so far, as to impute it to a want of feeling. I have even listened to speculations so ingenious, as to refer it to a peculiarity in the climate—a reasoning that was thought to be supported by the well-known imperturbability of the Aborigines. Whether the theory be true or false, the argument that is brought to maintain it is of most unfortunate application. The tornado itself is not more furious than the anger of the Indian, nor is it easy to imagine a conformation of the human mind that embraces a wider range of emotions, from the fiercest to the most gentle, than what the original owners of this country possess. Civilization might multiply the changes of their humour, but it would scarcely exhibit it in more decided forms. I confess, however, that even in Cad-

wallader, I thought, during the first weeks of our intercourse, something of this restraint of manner was perceptible. In his countrymen, and more particularly his countrywomen, the defect seemed no less apparent. In New-England, notwithstanding their extraordinary kindness in deeds, there was often an apparent coldness of demeanour that certainly lessened, though it could not destroy its effect.*

* An instance of this suppressed manner occurred while the author was at New-York in the summer of 1825. An English frigate (the Hussar) entered the port, and anchored a short distance below the town. Her captain was the owner of a London-built wherry, which he kept for his private sport, as his countrymen on shore are known to keep racers. It seems that some conversation concerning the model of this boat, and of those of New-York, and perhaps, too, respecting the comparative skill of four London watermen whom he was said to retain as a sort of grooms, and the renowned Whitehallers, induced him to insert a challenge in the journals, wherein he threw down the glove, for a trial of speed, to all the mariners or sportsmen of the city. The Whitehallers took up the gage, and a day was publicly named for the trial. It was quite evident that the citizens, who are keenly alive to any thing that affects their reputation on the water, let it be ever so trifling, took great interest in the result. Thousands of spectators assembled on the Battery; and, to keep alive the excitement, there were not five Englishmen or Englishwomen in the city who did not appear to back the enterprise of their countrymen. The distance run (about two miles) was from the frigate to a boat anchored in the Hudson, and thence to another which lay at a short distance from the Castle Garden, already described. On board of the latter, the judges (who, it is presumed, were of both nations,) had adopted those delicate symbols of victory which had so recently been pitted against each other in far less friendly encounters, *i. e.* the national flags. The writer and his friend, who, notwithstanding his philosophy, felt great interest in the result, took their stand on the belvidere of the castle, which commanded a fine view of the whole bay. On their right hand stood a young American naval officer, and on their left a pretty and highly excited young Englishwoman. The frigate fired a gun, and the two boats were seen dashing ahead at the signal. One soon took the lead, and maintained it to the end of the race, beating by near a quarter of a mile, though the oarsmen came in pulling only with one hand each. For some time, the distance prevented a clear view of which was likely to

This national trait can neither be likened to, nor accounted for, by any of those causes which are supposed to produce the approximating qualities in some of the people of our hemisphere. It is not the effect of climate, since it exists equally in 45° and 30°. It is not the phlegm of the German, for no one can be more vivacious, frank, cordial, and communicative than the American, when you have effected the easy task of breaking through the barrier of his reserve. It cannot be the insulated pride of the Spaniard, brooding under his cloak on the miserable condition of to-day, or dreaming of the glories of the past; nor is it the repulsive hauteur of the Englishman, for no

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be the victor. A report spread on the left that it was the boat of the frigate. The eyes of the fair Englishwoman danced with pleasure, and she murmured her satisfaction so audibly as to reach the ears of all near her. The writer turned to see the effect on his right-hand neighbour. He was smiling at the feeling of the lady, but soon gravely turned his eyes in the direction of the boats. He was asked which was ahead. He answered, "the Whitehallers!" and directed the attention to a simple fact to confirm his opinion. The victors were pulling with so swift and equal a stroke, as to render their oars (at that distance) imperceptible, whereas there were moments when the blades of those in the beaten boat could be distinctly seen. This the young lieutenant described as a "man-of-war stroke," which, he said, "could never beat a dead Whitehall-pull, let the rowers come from where they would." The fact proved that he was right. The English flag was lowered amid three manful cheers from the goal-boat, which was no other than the launch of the Hussar. With the exception of a few boys, the Americans, though secretly much elated, made no answer, and it was difficult to trace the least change in the countenances of the spectators. On quitting the Battery, the writer and his friend met a French gentleman of their acquaintance descending the Broadway to witness the race. He held up both hands, and shook his head, by the way of condolence. His error was explained. "Victors!" he exclaimed, looking around him in ludicrous surprise, "I could have sworn by the gravity of every face I see, that the Englishmen had beaten you half the distance!" It is no more than fair to add, that something was said of an accident to the Hussar's boat, of which the writer pretends to know nothing, but of which he is sure the grave crowd by which he was surrounded was quite as ignorant as himself.

one is more disposed to admit of the perfect equality of his fellow-creatures than the native of this country By some it has been supposed to be the fruits of the metaphysical, religious dogmas and stern discipline that were long taught and practised in so many of the original colonies. That the religion of the Puritans and of the Friends left their impressions, is, I think, beyond a doubt; for the very peculiarity of manner to which we have reference, is to be found, in different sections of the Union, modified by the absence or prevalence of their self-mortifying doctrines. Still, one finds degrees of this same exterior among the Episcopalians of New-York, the Catholics of Maryland, the merchants of the east, the great landed proprietors of the middle States, and the planters of the south. It is rather tempered than destroyed by the division of States, of religion, or of habits. It is said even to begin to exhibit itself among the French of Louisiana, who are already to be distinguished from their kinsmen in Europe by greater gravity of eye and mien. It is even so contagious, that no foreigner can long dwell within its influence without contracting more or less of its exterior. It does not arise from unavoidable care, since no people have less reason to brood over the calamities of life. There is no Cassius-like discontent to lead the minds of men into plots and treasons; for, from the time I entered the country to the present moment, amidst the utmost latitude of political discussion, I have not heard even a whisper against the great leading principles of the government.*

In despair of ever arriving at the solution of doubts which so completely baffled all conjecture and expe-

* The author will add, nor to the hour of his departure. The United States of America are, perhaps, the only country in christendom where political disaffection does not in a greater or less degree prevail.

rience, I threw myself on the greater observation of Cadwallader for the explanation of a habit which, the more I reflected, only assumed more of the character of an enigma. His answer was sufficiently sententious, though, when pressed upon the subject, he was not unwilling to support it by reasons that certainly are rather plausible, if not just. To the question —"To what do you ascribe the characteristic grave demeanour of your countrymen?" the reply was, "To the simplicity of common sense!" This was startling, and at first, perhaps, a little offensive; but you shall have his reasons in his own words.

"You admit yourself that the peculiarity which you mention is solely confined to manner. The host, the friend, the man of business, or the lady in her drawing-room, who receives you with less *empressement* than you have been accustomed to meet elsewhere, omits no duty or material act of kindness. While each seems to enter less into the interests of your existence, not one of them is selfishly engaged in the exclusive pursuits of his own.

"While the Americans have lived in the centre of the moral world, their distance from Europe, and their scattered population, have kept them, as respects association, in comparative retirement. They have had great leisure for reflection. Even England, which has so long and so richly supplied us with food for the mind, labours under a mental disadvantage which is not known here. Her artificial and aged institutions require the prop of concerted opinions, which, if it be not fatal to change, have at least acquired an influence that it is thought dangerous to disturb. In America, no such restraint has ever been laid on the human mind, unless it might be through the ordinary operation of passing prejudices. But those prejudices have always been limited in their duration, and have never possessed the impor-

tant prerogative of exclusive reverence. Men combated them at will, and generally with impunity. Even the peculiar maxims of the monarchy came to us, across the Atlantic, weakened by distance and obnoxious to criticism. They were assailed, shaken, and destroyed.

"Thought is the inevitable fruit of a state of being where the individual is thus permitted to enjoy the best effects of the highest civilization, with as little as possible of its disadvantages. I should have said thought itself was the reason of that gravity you observe, did I not believe it is more true to ascribe it to the nearest approximate quality in which that thought is exhibited. When there is much leisure, and all the other means to reflect on life, apart from those temptations which hurry us into its vortex, the mind is not slow to strip it of its gloss, and to arrive at truths that lie so near the surface. The result has been, in America, to establish common sense as the sovereign guide of the public will. In the possession of this quality, the nation is unrivalled. It tempers its religion, its morals, its politics, and finally, as in the case in question, its manners. The first is equally without bigotry or licentiousness; the second are generally consistent and sound; the third are purely democratic without the slightest approach to disorder; and the last are, as you see them, less attractive to you, perhaps, because unusual; but more in consonance with common sense than your own, inasmuch as they fail of an exaggeration which our reason would condemn. Many nations excel us in the arts, but none in the truths of human existence. The former constitute the poetry of life, and they are desirable so far as they temper society; but when they possess it to the exclusion of still nobler objects, their dominion is dangerous, and may easily become fatal. Like all other pursuits in which the imagination

predominates, they have a tendency to diminish the directness with which reason regards every thing that appertains to our nature.

"Although there is nothing incompatible between perfect political freedom and high rational refinement, there is certainly a greater addiction to factitious complaisance in a despotism than in a republic. The artificial deference which, in the former, is exacted by him who rules, descends through all the gradations of society, until its tone becomes imparted to an entire nation. I think it will be found, by referring to Europe, that manners, though certainly modified by national temperament and other causes, have become artificial in proportion as the sovereign power has exercised its influence. Though France, under the old regime, was not in theory more monarchical than many of the adjoining countries, the monarch, in fact, filled a greater space in the public mind. It would be difficult to find any other nation in which sacrifices so heavy, indeed, it may be said, so fatal, were daily and hourly made to appearances, as under the reign of Louis XIV. They were only the more dangerous, inasmuch as the great advancement of the nation made the most gifted men auxiliary to the propagation of deception. The part which Racine with his piety, Boileau with his wit, and even Fontaine with his boasted simplicity, did not disdain to play, humbler men might well desire to imitate. The consequences of this factitious tone in manners prevail to the present day in France, which, notwithstanding her vast improvements, has yet a great deal to concede to the immutable and sacred empire of truth, before either religion, government, or morals, shall reach that degree of perfection which each and all may hope to attain. However agreeable habitual deference to forms may become, the pleasure is bought too dearly, when a just knowledge of ourselves, deceptive views of life, or even of sacred liberty itself, may be the

price. I should cite America as furnishing the very reverse of this proposition. Here, without pretending to any infallibility of judgment, all matters are mooted with the most fearless indifference of the consequences. In the tossings and agitations of the public opinion, the fine and precious grains of truth gradually get winnowed from the chaff of empiricism and interestedness, and, to pursue the figure, literally become the mental aliment of the nation. After the mind is thoroughly imbued with healthful moral truths, it admits the blandishments and exaggerations of conventional politeness with great distrust, and not unfrequently with distaste. When the principle is pushed into extremes, men become Trappists, and Puritans, and Quakers. Now, in this respect, every American, taken of course with the necessary allowances, is, more or less, a Puritan. He will not tell you he is enchanted to see you, when, in truth, he is perfectly indifferent to the matter; his thoughts are too direct for so gross a deception. Although he may not literally mean what he says, he means something much nearer to it than one meets with in what is called good society any where else.

"The native of New-England has certainly more of this peculiar exterior than the native of any other part of our country. This difference is unquestionably a result of the manners of the Puritans. But you are right in believing that it is, more or less, to be seen in the air of most Americans; perhaps of all, with the exception of those who have lived from infancy in what is called the most polished, which of itself implies the most artificial circles.

"A great deal of this exterior is also hereditary. The Englishman is the man of the coldest aspect in Europe, when you compare his ordinary temperament with his deportment. Has not the Englishman a sounder view of life than any other man in your hemisphere? If not, he has been singularly fortunate

in preceding all his competitors in the enjoyment of its most material advantages.

"France has been proverbial for grace of manner. But the manners of France are undergoing a sensible change, under the influence of the new order of things. Her gentlemen are becoming grave as they become thoughtful. Any one may observe, in passing through French society, the difference between the two schools. I confess that my taste is for the modern. I have been so much accustomed to the simplicity of American manners, as to find something that is congenial in the well-bred English, that is wanting in the well-bred French deportment, and precisely for the reason that it is still a little more natural. So far as this distinction goes, I honestly believe the Englishman has the advantage. But, with honourable exceptions, it will not do to push English complaisance too far. Perhaps, if we attempt a comparison, I shall be better understood.

"The Englishman and the American have, in a great degree, a common manner. I do not now speak of the gentlemen of the two countries, for much intercourse is rapidly assimilating the class every where, but of the deportment of the two entire nations. *You* will find both cold. There is certainly no great difference in the men, though more may be observed in the women. The English say that our women are much too cold, and we say that theirs are artificial without always being graceful. Of course, I speak of the mass, and not of exceptions in either case. Our women are, as you see, eminently feminine, in air, conversation. and feeling, and they are also eminently natural. You may find them cold, for, to be honest, they find you a little artificial; but, with their countrymen, they are frank, sincere, unreserved and natural, while I challenge the world to produce finer instances of genuine, shrinking delicacy, or of greater feminine propriety.

"The French gentleman has certainly one advantage over his island neighbour. He is uniformly polite; his conventional habits having apparently gotten the better of all his native humours. You are sure, so far as manner is concerned, of finding him to-morrow as you left him to-day. There may be some question on this point with the Englishman, but none with the American. Common sense is quite as equal as good-breeding. The American gentleman is less graceful than the Frenchman, and may be even less conventional in his air than the Englishman, but he is commonly gravely considerate of the feelings. Were he disposed to abuse his situation, his countrymen would not tolerate his airs. I have already told you that humanity is a distinctive feature of American intercourse. The men of secondary manners may be more subdued in air than those of Europe, but it is altogether confined to appearance. No man is kinder in all his feelings or habits.*

"But this digression is leading me from what you call the peculiar coldness of the American manner. The word is not well chosen, since coldness implies a want of feeling, and want of feeling cannot exist where every concession is made to humanity, except in words and looks. Mr. Hodgson says, he does not think the habit of which he complains is to be seen in the better classes of the men, though he appears,

* The writer landed in England, on his return to Europe. Curiosity led him to the gallery of the House of Commons The member on the floor was a stranger to him. A well-dressed man stood at his elbow, and he ventured to ask him if he knew who was speaking. "No," was the answer, and it was given with an elevation and a peculiar sententiousness of voice which cannot be committed to paper. The writer was induced to repeat the experiment, simply as an experiment, four times, and always with the same success, except that in the last instance he obtained the name, but in a note pitched in the same key. He is bold to say, that the coldest looking man in America would have answered in a tone of more "*civilization.*"

unwillingly enough too, to admit, that the females are not quite so free from the charge. Mr. Hodgson, it will be remembered, was a bachelor, and he ought to have known that this is a class of men far less in demand in America than in England Without appearing to make the smallest allowance for the momentary warmth that is always excited by countrymen meeting in a foreign land, he puts the seeming cordiality of the wives of certain English soldiers whom he met at Niagara, in strong contrast with the cold demeanour of the wives of the thousands of Americans whom he had just left. This gentleman does not pretend that there was actually more of feeling in the one case than in the other; he seems perfectly willing to ascribe the difference to its true cause, viz., a simple difference in manner. Just to this extent I admit the justice of his remark, and I have endeavoured to give you some reasons for its existence. One would not gather from the book of Mr. Hodgson, rational and candid as it is, that the author had ever seen many countries besides his own; if he has, he must be aware that the air and manner of a French *paysanne* would still be more likely to flatter his self-complacency than the cordiality of the soldiers' wives. It would not be difficult for you and me to quote still stronger instances of the extent to which this manner is carried among different people, and people, too, who have no very extraordinary reputation either for morals or civilization.

"I think it will be found, too, on reflection, that the subdued manner (the word is more just than cold) of the Americans, is more owing to the simple and common sense habit they have of viewing things, than even to rusticity, or indeed to any other cause. It cannot be the former, since it is to be traced among those who have passed their lives in the most polished intercourse in the cities no less than in the country, and amid elegance as well as rural simplicity. While

we have very few certainly who devote their leisure to the exclusive cultivation of the mere refinements of life, there is perhaps a smaller degree of rustic awkwardness in the country than can be found among an equal number of the inhabitants of any other nation. The very quality which keeps down the superfluous courtesy of the upper, has an agency in elevating the manners of the lower classes who, considering their situations, are at all times surprisingly self-possessed and at their ease. A far more just objection to the social usages of the Americans, might be discovered in the rough and hardy manner in which they support their opinions, than in this absence of assumed cordiality. The latter, though it may become necessary by indulgence, can, after all, only impose upon a novice, whereas the former may easily become offensive, without in the slightest degree advancing what they urge. But it is so difficult, and even so dangerous, to say how far courtesy shall infringe on truth, that one can tolerate a little inconvenience to favour the latter; and depend on it, though the practice is often excessively unpleasant in the individual (and much oftener here than in Europe), it is a sound, healthful, national failing, that purchases great good at a small price."

I shall make no comments on the opinions of my friend. There is, however, one thing that may be said on the subject which will go to prove the justice of his theory. There is, at least, nothing conventional in this coldness of manner of his countrymen. Men do not admit it as a part of their gentility; but it has altogether the air of being either the effect of their national temperament, or, as Cadwallader would prove, of habits that proceed from a reflection so general and uniform, as to have perfectly acquired the simplicity and force of nature. I think also that he has not laid sufficient stress on the effect of republican institutions and the want of a court; but one

cannot expect so thorough a democrat to speak with much reverence of the latter. He has explained that, by the prevalence of "common sense," he does not mean that every man in America is wise enough to discriminate between the substance and the shadow of things, but that so many are, as to have given a tone to the general deportment of the whole: a case that may very well exist in a reading and instructed nation.

TO THE COUNT JULES DE BÉTHIZY,

&c. &c.

New-York, ——

From the hour that we landed in America, to the present moment, the voices of men, the journals, and the public bodies, have been occupied in celebrating the work of national gratitude. The visit of La Fayette, his ancient services, his appearance, his sayings, his tact, his recollection of, and meeting with veterans whom he had known under other and more adverse circumstances, are the constant themes of press and tongue. The universal sentiment, and the various scenes to which it has given birth, have not failed to elicit many sparks of that sort of feeling which is creditable to human nature, since it proves that man, with all his selfishness and depravity, is the repository of a vast deal that is generous and noble. Two or three little anecdotes have come to my ears that may serve to amuse, if not to edify you.

One of the familiar, and certainly not the least touching manners, chosen by the Americans, to evince their attachment to La Fayette, who has been well

termed the "nation's guest," is by making offerings of the labours of their own hands, in the shape of a thousand trifling articles that may affect his personal comfort, or at least manifest their zeal in its behalf Among others, it seems that a hatter had even gone so far as to send a hat, or hats, to France, as his portion of these little contributions. This kindness was remembered, and a short time after their arrival, M. George La Fayette went to the shop of the individual, and ordered a supply for himself. The hat was furnished as a matter of course, with the directness and simplicity that characterize these people. The next thing was to demand the bill; for you will readily understand that the motive of M. La Fayette, was to patronize a tradesman who had been so attentive to his father. "I was paid forty years ago for all the hats I can make for any of the family of La Fayette," was the answer.

A gentleman, who, from former acquaintance and his situation in life, is much around the person of the General, has related another instance of the deep and nearly filial interest that is taken in his comfort, by all classes of the citizens. It is well known that in com mon with so many others, the fortune of La Fayette suffered by the changes in France, no less than by his own sacrifices. This circumstance had, as usual, been exaggerated, until an impression has obtained among many of the less informed, that he is actually subjected to personal privations. Their 'guest' appeared among the Americans simply clad, in a coat of black, which was not of a particularly fine fabric, and with other habiliments equally plain. Now, it so happens, that the American who is the least above the labouring classes, habitually wears a finer cloth than the corresponding classes even in England, with perhaps an exception in favour of the very highest in the latter country. This peculiarity in the attire of La Fayette, struck the eye of a mechanic, who did

not fail to ascribe it to a want of means. He sought an opportunity to confer with Colonel ———, from whose mouth I have the anecdote, and after a little embarrassment and circumlocution, explained his object. "I see, Colonel ———, that our friend has not as good a coat as he ought to wear, and I think he should be the best dressed man in America. You know very well that I am nothing but a plain mechanic, and that I should not know what to say to a man like La Fayette in such a case as this; but you are a gentleman, and can smooth the thing over as it should be, and I'll thank you just to get him a suit of the best, in any way you please, and then the bill can be given to me, and nothing further shall ever be said of the matter."

I might fill a volume with similar instances of attachment and affection, with addresses, processions and ceremonies, which have occurred since the reception of the veteran Frenchman, amongst these usually quiet and rarely excited people. A brief description of a *fête* at which I was present, and which is, in some measure, connected with my own movements, must, however, suffice for the present. I shall describe it both for its peculiar nature, and because it may serve to give a general idea of the taste, manners, and appearance of the Americans, in similar scenes.

At the return of La Fayette from his excursion to Boston, the citizens of New-York determined to entertain him in their collective capacity. He had been feasted by corporate bodies innumerable; but this ball was to be given by subscription, and to include as many of all the different classes of society, as could well assemble in the place chosen for its celebration. That spot was the abandoned fortress already mentioned by the name of the Castle Garden, as the place where he landed. The castle, you will remember, stands on an artificial island, a few hundred feet from

the promenade, that is called the Battery. The work itself is a building of dark red freestone, almost circular, and I should think near two hundred feet in diameter. Most of this space is occupied by the area in the centre, the work itself being little more than a covered battery, which by subsequent changes has been transformed into alcoves, and has a fine terrace or rather belvidere, around the whole of its summit. A tall spar was raised in the centre of the area, and a vast awning was constructed of the sails of a ship of the line, to cover the whole. The interior side of this awning was concealed by flags, arranged in such a manner as to give a soft, airy finish to the wide vault, and a roof that inclined inwards from the ramparts for a little distance was covered with *gradins*, like the seats of an amphitheatre. Thus the interior might be said to be divided into several parts. There was the great salle, or the area of the garden, the immense, low, vaulted, circular corridor, within the work; the gradins, a little below the belvidere, supported by pillars, and the belvidere itself, all beneath the awning. In addition to these, on the side of the castle next the city, is a range of apartments, some of which have been added since the new destination of the building, and are on a scale suited to its present uses.

Cadwallader procured tickets for us both, and at ten o'clock we proceeded to the centre of attraction. Two of the principal streets of the city terminate near each other directly in face of the castle garden. The carriages entered the battery (the promenade) by one, and left it by the other. Temporary fences were erected to keep the coachmen in the line after they had arrived on the mall. I can say with truth, that I never knew a company set down and taken up with more facility and order. You will recollect there were six thousand guests, a number that is rarely exceeded at any European entertainment. The

quiet which prevailed, is a sufficient proof that established orders in society are not at all necessary, at least, for the tranquillity of its ordinary intercourse. There were no *gensd'armes*, though I was told some police officers were present, and yet I saw no attempts to break the line, or any other instances of those impertinences, with which coachmen with us are apt to emulate what they conceive to be the importance of their masters. Indeed, all my experience goes to show, that the simplest way of destroying the bickerings and heart-burnings of precedency and rank, is to destroy their usages altogether. No doubt human nature is just as active among these republicans, as it is in England or in Germany, and that A. secretly envies or derides the claims of B.; but it would be perfectly absurd in either of the parties to permit a public exposure of their pretensions, since the world would be very apt to tell them both, the distinction you enjoy is only by sufferance, and dignified and quiet behaviour is one requisite for its possession at all Thus, you see, however rancorous may be the rivalry, third parties are at all events spared the exhibition of its folly. But this truth is abundantly proved in the saloons of your own fascinating metropolis, where one is daily elbowed by peers, without being the least conscious of the honours he is receiving, and where society is kept so perfectly and so admirably distinct from government.

We alighted at the bridge which connects the island to the battery. By the aid of awnings, carpets and other accessories, this passage, over which armed heels had so often trod, and lumbering wheels rumbled with their groaning loads of artillery, was converted into a long, and prettily decorated gallery. The light was judiciously kept down, so as to give the entrance a subdued and pleasing, and a strikingly romantic effect. You caught, in passing, glimpses of the water. and heard its quiet washing in dull con-

trast to the strains of distant music. Steam-boats were landing the guests by hundreds, on the narrow terrace which surrounds the base of the castle, and a never-ceasing current of gaily dressed and graceful beings were gliding from out the darkness on either hand, or along the gallery, towards a flood of light which was shed through the massive frowning portal of the fortress, as a sort of beacon to direct our footsteps. Such a sight was not likely to fail of its effect on one as weakly constituted as myself, dear Jules, and abandoning the pensive and deliberative step with which I had loitered to contemplate the peculiar and pleasing approach to the scene, I hastened on to plunge at once into its gayest vortex. I know not whether it was owing to the contrast between the judicious gloom of the romantic gallery and the brilliant salle, to the magnitude of that salle, or to the fact that with European complaisance I had expected no very imposing exhibition of taste and splendour among these people, but, certain is it, that, though far from unaccustomed, as you well know, to fêtes and spectacles, I never entered one whose *coup d'œil* produced an effect like this. As we hurried towards the gate in hundreds, (for two or three steamboats had just discharged their living cargoes), I had been seized with a very natural apprehension, that the whole was to terminate in one of those well-dressed throngs in which it would be impossible to see, hear, converse, dance, or, in short, to be alive to any other sensations than those of excessive heat, *ennui*, and, perhaps, a head-ache. But though so many poured along the approaches, like water gushing through some narrow passage, the rush, the crowd, and the inconvenience ceased as you entered the principal space, like the tumult of that element subsiding as it emerges into a broad basin. There were, probably, five thousand persons in the salle when we entered, and yet there was abundant room for all the

usual pursuits of such an assembly. Some thirty, or forty, or fifty, sets of *quadrilles* were in graceful motion, hundreds were promenading around the dancers, and, literally, thousands were hanging over them on the belvidere and among the gradins, looking down with the complacency of those benignant beings to whom poets give a habitation in the clouds.

It is, perhaps, not saying much for the self-possession of two travellers who had passed through so many similar scenes, but it is, nevertheless, strictly true, that both Cadwallader and myself, instead of passing on with suitable deference to the rest of the guests, came to a dead halt on the threshold of this scene, and stood, near a minute, gazing around us and upwards, with wonder. We had, however, the consolation to discover that we were not alone in our underbred surprise, for a hundred pretty exclamations that escaped prettier lips, and the immense pressure of the crowd at the spot where our steps had been arrested, apprised us that the sensation was common to all. Escaping from this throng, we had leisure to study the details which had produced so imposing a *tout-ensemble*.

An immense cloud of flags, composed of all the colours of the rainbow intermingled, was waving gently in the upper air, shadowing the area at an elevation of not less than seventy feet. The enormous spar which supported this canopy of ensigns had been converted into the shaft of an immense lustre, whose several parts were composed of entire chandeliers. From these were streaming the floods of noon-day light which gave to the centre of the salle its extraordinary brilliancy, while countless shaded and coloured lamps shed a fainter and softer glow on those parts of the scene which taste and contrast required to be kept down. Directly in front of the entrance was a double flight of steps (one of half a dozen which led to the gradins and the belvidere).

Beneath this double flight, a marquee of the dimensions of a small chamber had been arranged for the particular reception of the guest. It was gaily decorated; containing a supper-table, sofas, a chandelier, and, in short, all the garniture of a separate room. The curtains were withdrawn in such a manner, that any who chose might examine its interior. Opposite to this again, and directly over the portal, was the orchestra, appended to the side of the building which contained the eating apartments, and the ordinary dwelling of the place.

Shortly after we had entered, La Fayette arrived. The music changed to a national air, the gay sets dissolved as by a charm, and the dancers who had been dispersed over the floor of the salle formed a lane, whose sides were composed of masses that might have contained two thousand eager faces each. Through this gay multitude the old man slowly passed, giving and receiving the most cordial and affectionate salutations at every step. I had not seen him since his departure for the east. But though the freshness of his reception was past, his presence had lost none of its influence. To me he appeared some venerable and much respected head of a vast family, who had come to pass an hour amid their innocent and gay revels. He was literally like a father among his children.

The assemblage was composed of every class in the country, with the exception of those perhaps who are compelled to seek their livelihood by positive bodily labour. Still there was no awkwardness apparent, no presumption on the part of the one, nor any arrogance on that of others. All passed off simply, harmoniously, and with the utmost seeming enjoyment.

My friend, who is very universally known, was saluted at every step by some fair one, or some man, who, to the eye at least, had the port and bearing of

a gentleman. "Who is that?" I asked him, after he had paused an instant to speak to a young couple who were promenading the room together. "That is young ——— and his bride. He has recently returned from his travels, to take possession of a fine estate, which has descended to him from the old Dutch patricians of our State, and to marry that sweet creature on his arm, who has had power enough to retain her influence after his tour through Europe, and who, by-the-bye, is a distant cousin of my own." "And that?" I continued. "A city politician," returned Cadwallader, smiling. "He is ambitious of ruling his ward, though a man of family, fortune, and education; and he to whom he has just spoken is a brazier, and is his rival, and often too with success. This grave-looking man in black is a state politician; and he who is lounging with those ladies yonder, is one of the meridian of Washington. They are all connected, and act in concert, and yet each keeps his proper sphere as accurately as the planets. Those half dozen fashionable looking young men are the sons of gentlemen, and he who speaks to them in passing, is the son of a mechanic who is in their employ. They are probably brother officers in some militia regiment." "And he to whom you have just spoken?" "That is my hatter, and a very good one he is too. Now that man, in common, no more expects to associate with me, or to mingle in my ordinary recreations, than I should, to sit at the table of the king of France; and yet he is sensible, discreet, and in many things well informed. Such a man would neither overlook an unnecessary slight, nor would he be apt to presume beyond the mark between us which his own good sense will be sure to prescribe. He knows our habits are different, and he feels that I have the same right to enjoy mine, that he has to possess his own. You see we are very good

friends, and yet this is probably the first time we ever met in the same company."

In this manner we passed through the crowd, until we had gained the terrace. Here we paused, to take a more deliberate view of what I will not term an assemblage, for its adjuncts and peculiar features strictly entitle it to be called a prospect. The vast extent of the salle lent an air of magic to the whole scene. Slight, delicate beings* seemed to be floating beneath us at a distance that reduced their forms to the imaginary size of fairies; while the low, softened music aided in the deception. I never witnessed a similar effect at any other fête. Even the glimpses that were here and there caught of the gloomy recesses, in which artillery had formerly frowned, assisted in lending the spectacle a character of its own. The side curtains of the canopy were raised for the admission of air, and one had only to turn his eyes from the dazzling fairy scene within, to look out upon the broad, placid, star-lit bay, which washed the foot of the fortress. I lingered on this spot near an hour, experiencing an unsocial delight that may seem to savour of the humour of our fraternity, especially when one remembers the numberless temptations to descend which were flitting like beings of the air before my eyes. But a crowd of sensations and reflections oppressed me.

Again and again I asked myself the question, if what I saw were true, and if I really were standing on the continent of Columbus. Could those fair, graceful creatures be the daughters and wives of the mechanics and tradesmen of a provincial town in North America? Perhaps, dear Béthizy, it was as-

* The delicacy of the American women is rather peculiar. It struck the writer that the females in common were under the size of middle Europe, and the men rather over.

sailing me in my weakest part; but I do not remember, before or since, ever to have been so alive to the injustice of our superficial and vague notions of this country, as while I stood gazing down on some two or three thousand of its daughters, who were not only attending, but actually adorning such a scene as this. Most of them certainly would have been abashed, perhaps *gauche*, if transported into one of our highly artificial coteries; but, believe me, the most laboured refinement of Europe might have learned, in this identical, motley, republican assemblage, that there is a secret charm in nature, which it may be sometimes dangerous to attempt to supersede. It has always appeared to me, that manner in a woman bears a strict analogy to dress. A degree of simple, appropriate embellishment serves alike to adorn the graces of person and of demeanour; but the moment a certain line is passed in either, the individual becomes auxiliary to the addition, instead of the addition lending, as it should, a grace to the individual. It is very possible, that, if one woman wears diamonds, another must do the same thing, until a saloon shall be filled with the contents of a jeweller's shop; but, after all, this is rather a contest between bright stones than bright eyes. What man has not looked a thousand times, even at beauty, with indifference, when it has been smothered by such an unnatural alliance; but what man has ever met beauty in its native attractions, without feeling her power influencing his inmost soul? I speak with no dissembled experience when I answer—None!

I think the females of the secondary classes in this country dress more, and those of the upper, less than the corresponding castes in Europe. The Americans are not an economical people, in one sense, though instances of dissolute prodigality are exceedingly rare among them. A young woman of the middling classes for instance, seldom gives much

of her thoughts towards the accumulation of a little dowry; for the question of what a wife will bring to the common stock is agitated much less frequently here than in countries more sophisticated. My companion assures me it is almost unprecedented for a lover to venture on any inquiries concerning the fortune of his fair one, even in any class. Those equivocal admirers, who find Cupid none the less attractive for having his dart gilded, are obliged to make their demonstrations with singular art and caution, for an American lady would be very apt to distrust the affection that saw her charms through the medium of an estate. Indeed he mentioned one or two instances in which the gentlemen had endeavoured to stipulate in advance for the dowries of their brides, and which had not only created a great deal of scandal in the coteries, but which had invariably been the means of defeating the matches; the father, or the daughter, finding, in each case, something particularly offensive in the proposition. A lady of reputed fortune is a little more certain of matrimony than her less lucky rival, though popular opinion must be the gage of her possessions until the lover can claim a husband's rights; unless indeed the amorous swain should possess, as sometimes happens, secret and more authentic sources of information. From all that I can learn, nothing is more common, however, than for young men of great expectations to connect themselves with females, commonly of their own condition in life, who are pennyless; or, on the other hand, for ladies to give their persons with one or two hundred thousand dollars, to men, who have nothing better to recommend them than education and morals. But this is digressing from my immediate subject.

The facility with which the fabrics of every country in the world are obtained, the absence of care on the subject of the future, and the inherent elevation

of character which is a natural consequence of education, and a consciousness of equal rights, cause all the secondary classes of this country to assume more of the exterior of the higher, than it is common to see with us. The exceptions must be sought among the very poorest and most depressed members of the community. The men, who are nowhere so apt at imitation as the other sex, are commonly content with garments that shall denote the comfort and ease of their several conditions in life, but the females are remarkable for a more aspiring ambition. Even in the country, though rusticity and a more awkward exterior were as usual to be seen, I looked in vain for those marked and peculiar characteristics of dress and air, that we meet in every part of Europe. In but one instance do I remember to have seen any number either of men or women, whose habiliments conveyed any idea of provincial costume. The exception was among the inhabitants of a little Dutch village, in plain view of this city, who are said to retain no small portion of the prejudices and ignorance of the seventeenth century, and whom the merry author of the burlesque history of New-York* accuses of believing they are still subject to the power of the United Provinces. As respects the whole of New-England, I saw some attempt at imitating the fashion of the day, in even the humblest individual, though the essay was frequently made on a material no more promising than the homely product of a household manufacture. In the towns, the efforts were, of course, far more successful, and I should cite the union of individuality of air with conformance to custom as a distinguishing feature of the women of the lower classes here. You will understand me better if I venture on that dangerous experiment, a comparison. A *grisette* of Paris, for

* Washington Irving.

instance, has a particularly smart and conventional air, though her attire is as different as possible from that of an *elégante*. But the carriage, the demeanour and the expressions of one Parisian *grisette*, is as much like those of another as well can be. Now the fashion of the attire, and not unfrequently the material of the dress of an American girl of a similar class, differs from that of the lady only in quality, and perhaps a little in the air in which it is worn. As you ascend in the scale of society, the distinctions, always excepting those delicate shades which can only be acquired by constant association in the best company, become less obvious, until it requires the tact of breeding to trace them at all. As I stood regarding the mixed assembly before me, I had the best possible illustration of the truth of what I will not call the levelling, for elevating is a far better word, effects of the state of society, which has been engendered by the institutions and the great abundance of this country. Of some three thousand females present, not a sixth of the whole number, perhaps, belonged to those classes that, in Europe, are thought to have any claims to compose the *élite* of society. And yet so far as air, attire, grace, or even deportment, were concerned, it must have been a sickly and narrow taste indeed that could have taken exceptions. Although so far removed from what we are accustomed to consider the world, the Americans, in general, have far less of what is called, in English, the manner of the 'shop' about them, than their kinsmen of England. These peculiar features are becoming every day less striking every where; but Cadwallader tells me they never existed in America at all. Few men are so completely limited to one profession, or trade, as not to possess a great many just and accurate ideas on other subjects; and though it may be a consequence that excellence is more rare in particular pursuits, it is certain that, in manner and in general intelligence,

the nation is greatly a gainer. The effect of this elevation of character (I persist in the term) was abundantly conspicuous at the castle garden *fête*. Both men and women deported themselves, and to all appearances looked quite as well as a far more select *réunion* in Europe. The distinguishing feature of American female manners is nature. The fair creatures are extremely graceful if left to exhibit their blandishments in their own way; but it is very evident, that a highly artificial manner in those with whom they associate, produces a blighting influence on the ease of even the most polished among them. They appear to me to shrink sensitively from professions and an exaggeration that form no part of their own politeness; and between ourselves, if they are wise, they will retain the unequalled advantage they now possess in carrying refinement no further than it can be supported by simplicity and truth. They are decidedly handsome: a union of beauty in feature and form, being, I think, more common than in any part of Europe north of the Adriatic. In general they are delicate; a certain feminine air, tone of voice, size and grace being remarkably frequent. In the northern, eastern and middle states, which contain much more than half the whole population of the country, the women are fair; though brunettes are not unfrequent, and just as blondes are admired in France, they are much esteemed here, especially, as is often the case, if the hair and eyes happen to correspond. Indeed it is difficult to imagine any creature more attractive than an American beauty between the ages of fifteen and eighteen. There is something in the bloom, delicacy and innocence of one of these young things, that reminds you of the conceptions which poets and painters have taken of the angels. I think delicacy of air and appearance at that age, though perhaps scarcely more enchanting than what one sees in England, is even more common here than in the mother

country, especially when it is recollected how many more faces necessarily pass before the eye in a given time in the latter nation than in this. It is often said that the women of this climate fade earlier than in the northern countries of Europe, and I confess I was, at first, inclined to believe the opinion true. That it is not true to the extent that is commonly supposed, I am, however, convinced by the reasoning of Cadwallader, if indeed it be true at all. Perhaps a great majority of the females marry before the age of twenty, and it is not an uncommon thing to see them mothers at sixteen, seventeen, or eighteen. Almost every American mother nurses her own infant. It is far more common to find them mothers of eight, or of ten children, at fifty, than mothers of two or three. Now the human form is not completely developed in the northern moiety of this Union, earlier than in France, or in England. These early marriages, which are the fruits of abundance, have an obvious tendency to impair the powers of the female, and to produce a premature decay. In addition to this cause, which is far more general than you may be disposed to believe, there is something in the customs of the country which may have a tendency, not only to assist the ravages of time, but to prevent the desire to conceal them. There is no doubt that the animal, as well as the moral man, is far less artificial here than in Europe. There is thought to be something deceptive in the use of the ordinary means of aiding nature, which offends the simple manners of the nation. Even so common an ornament as rouge is denied, and no woman dares confess that she uses it. There is something so particularly soft and delicate in the colour of the young females one sees in the streets here, that at first I was inclined to give them credit for the art with which they applied the tints; but Cadwallader gravely assured me I was wrong. He had no doubt that certain individuals did, in secret,

adopt the use of rouge; but within the whole circuit of his acquaintance he could not name one whom he even suspected of the practice. Indeed, several gentlemen have gone so far as to assure me that when a woman rouged, it is considered in this country, as *prima facie* testimony that her character is frail. It should also be remembered, that when an American girl marries, she no longer entertains the desire to interest any but her husband. There is perhaps something in the security of matrimony that is not very propitious to female blandishments, and one ought to express no surprise that the wife who is content with the affections of her husband, should grow a little indifferent to the admiration of the rest of the world. One rarely sees married women foremost in the gay scenes. They attend, as observant and influencing members of society, but not as the principal actors. It is thought that the amusements of the world are more appropriate to the young, who are neither burthened nor sobered with matrimonial duties, and who possess an inherent right to look about them in the morning of life in quest of the partner who is to be their companion to its close. And yet I could name, among my acquaintances here, a dozen of the youngest-looking mothers of large and grown-up families that I remember ever to have seen.

The freedom of intercourse which is admitted between the young of the two sexes in America, and which undeniably is admitted with impunity, is to me, who have so long been kept sighing in the distance, perfectly amazing. I have met with self-sufficient critics from our side of the Atlantic, who believe, or affect to believe, that this intercourse cannot always be so innocent as is pretended. When questioned as to the grounds of their doubts, they have uniformly been founded on the impression that what could not exist with impunity with us, cannot exist with impunity here. They might just as well pre

tend, in opposition to the known fact, that a republican form of government cannot exist in America, because it could not well exist in Turkey as the Ottoman empire is now constituted. That the confidence of parents is sometimes abused in America, is probably just as true as it is that their watchfulness is sometimes deceived in Europe; but the intelligence, the high spirit, and the sensitiveness of the American (who must necessarily be a party to any transgressions of the sort) on the subject of female reputation, is in itself sufficient proof that the custom is attended with no general inconvenience. The readiness of the American gentleman to appeal to arms in defence of his wounded pride is too well known to be disputed. The duels of this country are not only more frequent, but they are infinitely more fatal than those of any other nation. We will hereafter consider the cause and discuss their manner. But no reasonable man can suppose that a sagacious nation, which is so sensitive on the point of honour, would stupidly allow their sisters and daughters to be debauched, when their own personal experience must apprize them of the danger to which they are exposed. The evil would necessarily correct itself. The chief reason why the present customs can exist without abuse, is no doubt owing to the fact that there is no army, nor any class of idlers, to waste their time in dissolute amusements. Something is also due to the deep moral feeling which pervades the community, and which influences the exhibition of vice in a thousand different ways. But having said so much on the subject, you may expect me to name the extent to which this freedom of intercourse extends. Under the direction of my friend Cadwallader, I shall endeavour to acquit myself of the obligation.

You will readily understand that the usages of society must always be more or less tempered by the circles in which they are exhibited. Among those

families which can claim to belong to the *élite*, the liberty allowed to unmarried females, I am inclined to think, is much the same as is practised among the upper classes in England, with this difference, that, as there is less danger of innovation on rank through fortune-hunters and fashionable aspirants, so is there less jealousy of their approaches. A young American dances, chats, laughs, and is just as happy in the saloon, as she was a few years before in the nursery. It is expected that the young men would seek her out, sit next her, endeavour to amuse her, and, in short, to make themselves as agreeable as possible. By the memory of the repentant Benedict, Compte Jules, but this is a constant and sore temptation to one who has never before been placed in the jeopardy of such a contagious atmosphere! But it is necessary to understand the tone of conversation that is allowed, in order to estimate the dangers of this propinquity.

The language of gallantry is never tolerated. A married woman would conceive it an insult, and a girl would be exceedingly apt to laugh in her adorer's face. In order that it should be favourably received, it is necessary that the former should be prepared to forget her virtue, and to the latter, whether sincere or not, it is an absolute requisite that all adulation should at least wear the semblance of sincerity. But he who addresses an unmarried female in this language, whether it be of passion or only feigned, must expect to be exposed, and probably disgraced, unless he should be prepared to support his sincerity by an offer of his hand. I think I see you tremble at the magnitude of the penalty! I do not mean to say that idle pleasantries, such as are mutually understood to be no more than pleasantries, are not sometimes tolerated; but an American female is exceedingly apt to assume a chilling gravity at the slightest trespass on what she believes, and, between ourselves, rightly believes, to be the dignity of her sex. Here, you will

perceive, is a saving custom, and one, too, that it is exceedingly hazardous to infringe, which diminishes one half of the ordinary dangers of the free communication between the young of the two sexes. Without doubt, when the youth has once made his choice, he endeavours to secure an interest in the affections of the chosen fair, by all those nameless assiduities and secret sympathies, which, though they appear to have produced no visible fruits, cannot be unknown to one of your established susceptibility. These attractions lead to love; and love, in this country, nineteen times in twenty, leads to matrimony. But pure, heartfelt affection, rarely exhibits itself in the language of gallantry. The latter is no more than a mask, which pretenders assume and lay aside at pleasure; but when the heart is really touched, the tongue is at best but a miserable interpreter of its emotions. I have always ascribed our own forlorn condition to the inability of that mediating member to do justice to the strength of emotions that are seemingly as deep as they are frequent.

There is another peculiarity in American manners that should be mentioned. You probably know that in England far more reserve is used, in conversation with a female, than in most, if not all of the nations of the continent. As, in all peculiar customs, each nation prefers its own usage; and while the English lady is shocked with the freedom with which the French lady converses of her personal feelings, ailings, &c., the latter turns the nicety of the former into ridicule. It would be an invidious office to pretend to decide between the tastes of such delicate disputants; but one manner of considering the subject is manifestly wrong. The great reserve of the English ladies has been termed a *mauvaise honte*, which is ascribed to their insular situation, and to their circumscribed intercourse with the rest of the world. And yet it may be well questioned if the *paysanne*

cannot successfully compete with the *élégante*, in this species of refinement, or whether a *dame des halles* cannot rather more freely discuss her animal functions than a *dame de la cour*. This is a manner of disposing of the question that will not abide the test of investigation, since it is clear that refinement makes us reserved, and not communicative, on all such topics. Fashion, it is true, may cause even coarseness to be sometimes tolerated, and, after all, it is no easy matter to decide where true refinement ends, or sickliness of taste commences. Let all this be as it may, it is certain that the women of America, of all classes, are much more reserved and guarded in their discourse, at least in presence of our sex, than even the women of the country whence they derive their origin. Various opinions are entertained on the subject amongst themselves. The vast majority of the men like it, because they are used to no other custom. Many, who have got a taste of European usages, condemn it as over-fastidious; but my friend Cadwallader, who is not ignorant of life in both hemispheres, worships it, as constituting one of the distinctive and appropriate charms of the sex. He stoutly maintains, that the influence of woman is more felt and revered in American society than in any other; and he argues, with no little plausibility, that it is so because, while she rarely or never exceeds the natural duties of her station, she forgets none of those distinctive features of her sex and character, which, by constantly appealing to the generosity of man by admitting her physical weakness, give strength and durability to her moral ascendancy. I think, at all events, no intelligent traveller can journey through this country without being struck by the singular air of decency and self-respect which belongs to all its women, and

no honest foreigner can deny the kindness and respect they receive from the men.*

With these restrictions, which cannot be infringed without violating the rules of received decorum, you will readily perceive that the free intercourse between the unmarried is at once deprived of half its danger. But the upper classes in this country are far from neglecting many necessary forms. As they have more to lose by matrimonial connexions than others, common prudence teaches them the value of a proper caution. Thus a young lady never goes in public without the eye of some experienced matron to watch her movements. She cannot appear at a play, ball, &c. &c. without a father, or a brother, at least it is thought far more delicate and proper that she should have a female guardian. She never rides nor walks—unless in the most public places, and then commonly with great reserve—attended by a single man, unless indeed under circumstances of a peculiar nature. In short, she pursues that course which rigid delicacy would prescribe, without how-

* A conversation once occurred between a French and an American gentleman on this subject, in presence of the writer. The former insisted that the Americans did not treat their women as politely as the French, though he did not deny thinking their treatment substantially kind. "For instance," he said, "you will not, half the time, give a lady the wall in passing in the street." "Very true," returned the American, "we carry our politeness much further; we are humane. There is not a street in all America without *trottoirs*, and most of them, as you well know, are broad and comfortable. It is true, we inherit the custom from England; but had we not, the necessities of woman alone would have caused us to adopt some such plan for her relief. We commonly take the right in passing, because it is most convenient to have a general rule. If any thing, the wall is neither so safe nor so agreeable as the outer side of the walk." Now it appears to the writer, that this reply contains the very essence of the kindness of man to woman in America. There is little show in it; but every thing that is considerate and useful.

ever betraying any marked distrust of the intentions of the other sex. These customs are relaxed a little as you descend in the scale of society; but it is evidently more because the friends of a girl with ten or twenty thousand dollars, or of a family in middle life, have less jealousy of motive than those of one who is rich, or otherwise of a particularly desirable connexion.

I shall close this long and discursive epistle with one more distinctive custom, that may serve to give you an idea of the tone and simplicity of this society. There is something repugnant to the delicacy of American ideas in permitting a lady to come, in any manner in contact with the world. A woman of almost any rank above the labouring classes, is averse to expose herself to the usual collisions, bargainings, &c. &c. of ordinary travelling. Thus, the first thing an American woman requires to commence a journey, is a suitable male escort; the very thing that with us would be exceptionable. Nothing is more common, for instance, when a husband or a brother hears that a respectable acquaintance is about to go in the same steam-boat, stage, or on the same route, as that in which his wife or sister intends to journey, than to request the former to become her protector. The request is rarely refused, and the trust is always considered flattering, and commonly sacred. Here you see that the very custom which in Europe would create scandal, is here resorted to, under favour of good morals and directness of thought, to avert it. Cadwallader assures me that he was pained, and even shocked, at meeting well-bred women running about Europe attended only by a footman and a maid, and that for a long time he could not divest himself of the idea, that they were unfortunate in having lost all those male friends, whose natural duty it was to stand between their helplessness and the cold calculating selfishness of

the world. There would be some relief to the *ennui* of our desolation, gallant Jules, could our own single-blessedness take refuge in the innocent delights of such a servitude!—Adieu.

TO THE COMTE JULES DE BÉTHIZY,

&c. &c.

New-York,———

THERE is a secret pleasure in discoursing of the habits, affections, and influence of the sex, which invariably leads me astray from all other objects. I find, on perusing my letter-book, that the temptation of treating on the usages of the American women, completely lured me from a recollection of the *fête* in which I was happy enough to see so many of the fair creatures congregated. It is now too late to return to a description of a scene that would require hours to do it justice, and we must, in consequence, take our departure abruptly for the interior of the state of New-York. It had been previously arranged that Cadwallader and his ——— acquaintance should take passage in a steam-boat that was destined to receive La Fayette, and which was to depart, at a stated hour, from the terrace of the castle garden itself.

It must be confessed that these republicans have given a princely reception to their venerable guest. It forms one portion of their plan of hospitality, that he is to receive every accommodation to which he is entitled by his rank and services, and every facility of movement possible, without the least pecuniary cost. At every city, and indeed at every hamlet he

enters, lodgings, table, carriage, and, in short, all the arrangements of a well-ordered establishment, are made at the expense of the citizens. The government has nothing further to do with it, than that it offered him a vessel of war to conduct him to the country, and that it has issued orders that their ancient general should be received with the customary military honours at the different military and naval establishments, &c. that he may choose to visit. Every thing else is left to the good-will and grateful affection of the people, and nobly do they press forward to lay their little offerings on the altar of gratitude. The passage of La Fayette by land is invariably conducted under an escort of local cavalry, from town to town, while he never enters a State that he is not received either by its governor in person, or some suitable representative, who charges himself with all that is necessary to the comfort of the guest during the time that he is to remain in those particular territories. The receptions, entertainments, and contributions of the several towns are made subject to this general control, and by this means confusion is avoided, and despatch, an important part where so much is to be done, is commonly secured.

On the present occasion, La Fayette was to present himself in the towns on the banks of the Hudson; to examine the great military school at West Point, and to revisit many of those scenes of peculiar interest in which he had been an important actor five and forty years before. A capacious, comfortable, and even elegant steam-boat, was appropriated to his use.* It might readily have transported several

* The luxury of the American steam-boats is peculiar to the nation. Those of England are certainly next to them in size, show, and elegance; but the writer thinks they cannot be said to be equal in either. Their number, considering the population of the country, is amazing. There cannot be less than fifty, that

hundred souls, and one or two hundred could sleep beneath the decks with as much comfort as is usually found in the limited space of any vessel.

A little after midnight we were told it was necessary to depart. Our baggage and servants were already on board, and following the motions of La Fayette, who tore himself from a crowd of the fair and affectionate daughters of America, that seemed in truth to regard him with eyes of filial affection, we left the brilliant scene together. The boat was in readiness, and stepping on her decks from the lower terrace beneath the walls of the castle, in five minutes we were making swift progress along the noble river of the north, as it is often called in this country. For a few minutes we saw the halo of light which hung about the scene we had quitted, and heard the soft sounds of the distant music diffusing themselves on the water, and then came the gloomier objects of the sleeping town, with its tall, straight spires, its forests of masts, and its countless rows of battlement-walls, and of chimneys, in brick. The whole company, which consisted of some fifty or sixty, immediately retired to their births, and in a few minutes the dashing of the wheels against the water, and the dead, dull movement of the engine, lulled me to sleep.

I was up long before most of the company. La

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ply on the waters which communicate with the city of New-York alone. On the Mississippi and its tributaries, there are near a hundred, many of which are as large as small frigates. Of their elegance it may be said that one is now running on the Hudson, which, besides a profuse expenditure of marble, mahogany, the beautiful bird's-eye maple of the country, and all the other customary ornaments, has its cabins actually surrounded by compartments painted in landscapes, &c. &c. by artists who would occupy highly creditable situations among their brethren in Europe. This boat has run from New-York to Albany, a distance of about one hundred and forty-seven miles, in eleven hours and a half. Every day, too, is exhibiting improvements in machinery and form, as also in luxury and comfort.

Fayette was on deck, attended by one or two foreigners, who, like myself, were anxious to lose as little as possible of the glorious scenery of this renowned river, and two or three Americans, who had reached that time of life when sleep is becoming less necessary than it was in youth. The night had been foggy and unusually dark, and we had lost some time by touching on an oyster-bank that lies in one of the broadest parts of the river. This delay, however, though it served to disconcert some of the arrangements of the towns above, was certainly propitious to our wishes, since it enabled us, who had never before been on this water, to see more of its delightful landscapes. As I do not intend often to molest you with descriptions that cannot be considered distinctive, you will bear with me for a moment while I make a little digression in favour of the Hudson, which, after having seen the Rhine, the Rhone, the Loire, the Seine, the Danube, the Wolga, the Dnieper, and a hundred others, I fearlessly pronounce to embrace a greater variety of more noble and more pleasing natural objects, than any one of them all.

For the first fifty miles from its mouth, the Hudson is never much less than a mile in width, and, in two instances, it expands into small lakes of twice that breadth, running always in a direction a little west of north. The eye, at first, looks along an endless vista, that narrows by distance, but which opposes nothing but distance to the view. The western shore is a perpendicular rock, weather-worn and venerable, bearing a little of the appearance of artificial parapets, from which word it takes its name. This rock has a very equal altitude of about five hundred feet. At the foot of this wall of stone, there is, occasionally, room for the hut of some labourer in the quarries, which are wrought in its side, and now and then a house is seen seated on a narrow bottom, that may furnish subsistence for a few cattle, or, perhaps, a

garden for the occupant. The opposite bank is cultivated to the water, though it is also high, unequal, and broken. A few villages are seen, white, neat, and thriving, and of a youthful, vigorous air, as is generally the case with an American village, while there is scarcely an eligible site for a dwelling that is not occupied by a villa, or one of the convenient and respectable looking farm-houses of the country. Orchards, cattle, fields of grain, and all the other signs of a high domestic condition, serve to heighten the contrast of the opposing banks. This description, short and imperfect as it is, may serve to give you some idea of what I should call the first distinctive division of this extraordinary river. The second commences at the entrance of the Highlands. These are a succession of confused and beautifully romantic mountains, with broken and irregular summits, which nature had apparently once opposed to the passage of the water. The elements, most probably assisted by some violent convulsion of the crust of the earth, triumphed, and the river has wrought for itself a sinuous channel through the maze of hills, for a distance of not less than twenty miles. Below the Highlands, though the parapets and their rival banks form a peculiar scenery, the proportions of objects are not sufficiently preserved to give to the land, or to the water, the effect which they are capable of producing in conjunction. The river is too broad, or the hills are too low. But within the Highlands, the objection is lost. The river is reduced to less than half its former width, (at least it appears so to the eye,) while the mountains rise to three and four times the altitude of the parapets. Rocks, broken, ragged, and fantastic; forests, through which disjointed precipices are seen forming dusky backgrounds; promontories; dark, deep bays; low sylvan points; elevated plains; gloomy, retiring valleys; pinnacles; cones; ramparts, that overhang and frown

upon the water; and, in short, almost every variety of form in which the imagination can conjure pictures of romantic beauty, are assembled here. To these natural qualities of the scenery, must be associated more artificial accessories than are common to America. The ruins of military works are scattered profusely among these wild and ragged hills, and more than one tale of blood and of daring is recounted to the traveller, as he glides among their sombre shadows. To these relics of a former age, must be added the actual and flourishing establishment at the "Point," which comprises a village of academic buildings, barracks, and other adjuncts. I remember nothing more striking in its way than a view up one of the placid reaches of this passage. The even surface of the water, darkened here and there with broad shadows from a pyramid of rock; the glorious hue of a setting sun gilding the green sides of a distant mountain, over which the dark passage of a cloud was occasionally to be traced, resembling the flight of some mighty bird; with twenty or thirty lagging sails, whitening the channel, from whose smooth surface they were reflected as from that of a mirror, formed the picture.

Above the Highlands, the river again assumes a different character. From the bay of Newburg to that of Hudson, a distance at least of sixty or seventy miles, it appears like a succession of beautiful lakes, each reach preserving the proportions and appearance of a separate sheet of water, rather than of part of a river. There are a few of these detached views that may compete with any of Italy, and to one in particular there is a noble back-ground of mountains, removed a few miles from the water, which are thrown together in splendid confusion.

From Hudson to Albany, some thirty miles, the Hudson acquires more of the character of a river, according to our European notions. It is dotted

with islands, much like the Seine above Caudebec, and its scenery is picturesque and exceedingly agreeable. This character, indeed, is preserved even to Waterford, a few miles further, and above the point where its waters are increased by the contributions of the Mohawk.

At Waterford, one hundred and eighty miles from the sea, it becomes a reduced and rural stream, about as large as the Seine at Paris, and can be traced for leagues, sometimes still, lovely, and green with islands, and sometimes noisy, rapid, and tumbling, until you reach its sources in the rugged, broken mountains of the northern counties of the State. There are far mightier streams in this country than the Hudson, but there is not one of scenery so diversified and so pleasing. The Rhine, with its cities, its hundred castles, and its inexhaustible recollections, has charms of its own; but when time shall lend to the Hudson the interest of a deeper association, its passage will, I think, be pronounced unequalled. At present, even, it is not without a character of peculiar moral beauty. The view of all the improvements of high civilization in rapid, healthful, and unequalled progress, is cheering to philanthropy; while the countless villas, country-houses, and even seats of reasonable pretensions, are calculated to assure one, that, amid the general abundance of life, its numberless refinements are not neglected.

The Highlands had been the great military position of the Americans during the struggle for their independence. The scattered population of the country, at that time, lay along the shores of the Atlantic, between the forty-third and the thirty-third degrees of latitude. Perhaps one half of the entire physical strength of the country then existed in the States of New-England. It is well known, that after the insurrection had assumed the character of a war, Great Britain, instead of maintaining, was obliged to

resort to the more established principles of a regular contest to recover her former dominion. She obtained the possession of Montreal and New-York. Nature, by means of the Hudson and the northern lakes, offered extraordinary facilities of communication between the two places; and politicians, at the distance of three thousand miles, as they studied the map, vainly imagined that the cord of moral connexion could be severed as easily as one of a more perishable nature. It was believed, that by marching armies from the opposite extremities, and leaving sufficient garrisons at the most important points along their routes, the intercourse between the eastern and the other States could be so far interrupted as to render conquest certain. There can be no doubt that the success of such a plan would for a time have thrown great embarrassment in the way of the Americans, though it is morally certain it would have assured the final failure of the royal cause. The idea of covering a country, peopled like that in dispute, with military posts, ought to have been deemed too absurd for serious consideration. A power stronger than even that of the bayonet had already taught the intended victims of this plan confidence in themselves and in their cause. It is clear that the scheme could only succeed in a nation, whose people had been accustomed to consider themselves as appendages to, instead of the controllers of, a political system. It would have been giving to the Americans a vast advantage already possessed by their enemies, by dividing the power of the latter, and in inviting attack, as it must have indicated the points against which a superior force might have been easily directed. The experiment was afterwards made in the less populous States of the south, and completely failed, most of the garrisons being captured in succession. One might almost fancy he saw the stubborn yeomanry of New-England leaving their ploughs for a

week, in order to mingle in the pastime of reducing a hostile garrison. In short, the plan was German, and however successful it might have been between the Rhine and the Danube, it would have infallibly ended in disgrace, on the banks of the Hudson. It did end in disgrace, though time was not given for its complete developement. The yeomanry of New-England, instead of waiting for that portion of the royal force which debouched from the St. Lawrence to communicate with their brethren on the Hudson, saw fit to divert their course, and marched the whole of what was, in that day, a powerful army, prisoners of war to Boston. This was merely effecting in gross, that which, under other circumstances, would have infallibly been done in detail.

In America man had early discovered that the social machine was invented for his use, and it would have required something far more powerful than the display of a line of ensigns to direct him from the great object on which he had gravely, deliberately, and resolutely determined. Still as every foot of land acquired was so far a conquest as its sovereignty formed a portion of the disputed territory, it cannot be supposed that the Americans were indifferent to the possession of the strongest fortress of their country. By holding the Highlands they rendered the communications between the States more easy, and they kept a constant check on the movements of the royal forces in the vastly important city of New-York. West Point, the heart of their positions in these mountains, had been strongly fortified, and its defence was justly enough considered as of the greatest moment to their cause. After the arrival of the French army at Rhode Island, a conquest which had baffled all the previous exertions of the British, should have been abandoned as impossible. It would seem a hope was indulged that what could not be achieved by force of arms, might be effected by means less mar-

tial. The officer in command of West Point, a man of talents and of great personal courage, but one of depraved morals, was unfortunately disposed to make advances which Sir Henry Clinton, the English commander-in-chief, was glad to meet. It is well known that the British Adjutant-General André was employed as a negotiator on this occasion. La Fayette had been an actor in some of the scenes connected with this interesting event, and as we walked the deck together, and gazed upon the mountains which environed us, he revived his own recollections, and delighted some half dozen greedy auditors, by dwelling on the more familiar incidents of that day.

It appears that a British sloop of war had ascended the river, and anchored in a wide bay a few miles below the entrance of the Highlands. This sloop (the Vulture) had brought Major André, and, having landed him, was awaiting his return. The adjutant-general was induced to enter within the lines of the American sentinels for the purpose of acquiring a knowledge of the force, condition, and defences of his enemy; an act that clearly committed him as a spy. His retreat was rendered difficult, and instead of returning to the Vulture, he assumed a disguise, and attempted to regain New-York by traversing the intervening county of West-Chester. On his road he was intercepted by three young American farmers, who, according to the usage of the country, were in ambush to await the passage of any small party of the British, or of their friends, who might chance to come that way. By these young men was André arrested. The Americans were in common parlance termed the party *above*, (in reference to the course of the river,) and their foes, the party *below*. As there was nothing immediately in view about the person of Major André to betray his real character, it is quite possible that, had he retained his presence of mind, he might, after a short detention, have been permit-

ted to pass. But his captors manifested much more sagacity than the British officer himself. Some allowance, however, ought in justice to be made for the critical situation of the latter. He eagerly demanded "To which party do you belong?" The Americans adroitly answered "below." To this simple artifice he became a victim, immediately confessing himself a British officer. Now, it is quite plain to us, who speculate on the death of this young officer, that had he possessed a quickness of intellect equal to the questionable office he had assumed, his miserable fate might have been averted. By assuming the character of an American he would clearly have been safest, let his captors prove to be what they would; since, if enemies, it might have lulled their suspicions, or if friends, they would at most have conducted him to the British camp, the very spot he was risking his life to gain. Providence had ordained it differently. He was searched, and plans of the works at the Point, with other important communications, were found about his person. It then became necessary to entreat and to promise. Though the English were known to pay well, and to possess the means of bribing high, these young yeomen were true to the sacred cause of their country. Neither gold, nor honours, nor dread of the future, could divert them from their duty. The helpless adjutant-general was conveyed to the nearest post, delivered into the hands of its commandant, was sent to head-quarters, tried, and finally hanged.

During the time Arnold was maturing his work of treason, Washington was absent from the army, in the adjoining State of Connecticut, whither he had gone to arrange a plan for the ensuing and final campaign of the contest, with the commandant of the French forces. La Fayette was of the party. It happened that these military chiefs arrived in the mountains on the very morning when the arrest of André (under a

fictitious name) was made known at 'the Point.' The residence of Arnold was on the east side of the river. The principal fortress, or the 'Point,' was nearly opposite. Washington and his suite were engaged to breakfast at the former place, but a desire to inspect certain posts in the passes, interfered with the arrangement. Two aides* were despatched with an apology, and a promise to repair the failure at dinner. The other guests were at table (at breakfast), when a letter was put into the hands of Arnold, which he read without betraying any emotion. It was the report of the officer in advance, that he had arrested a "John Anderson," of the British army, under circumstances of great suspicion. As this was the name André had assumed by agreement, the traitor instantly knew his danger. After a moment's pause, he left the table, at which a dozen officers of rank had assembled to greet Washington, and ascended to his chamber. His wife had been able to penetrate an uneasiness which less anxious eyes had failed to detect, Apologizing to her guests, she followed her husband to his room. It is suspected that she had been privy to his intentions to betray the American cause. He communicated the failure of the plan, and his own imminent danger, in as few words as possible. He then left her in a swoon, stepping over her insensible body, and telling a maid to give assistance, he passed through the room, informing his guests, with the utmost coolness, that his wife was seized with a sudden indisposition, and that there was a necessity for his own immediate departure for the Point, in order to prepare for the military reception of the commander-in-chief. Although the known

* Hamilton, an aide of Washington, afterwards so distinguished in the history of his country; and M'Henry, an aide of La Fayette, subsequently Secretary of War. It is pleasant to trace these young men in the events of their early lives, through these familiar scenes.

cupidity of the man had excited very general disgust, his devotion to his country, which had been tried in so many battles, was not in the slightest degree distrusted. As yet, you will remember, he had all the evidences of his guilt in his own possession.

Quitting the house, Arnold mounted a horse belonging to one of his aides, and galloped a half a mile to a place where his barge was in waiting. He entered the boat with a favourable tide, and commanded the crew to pull down the river. His object was to get as soon as possible beyond the reach of the cannon of the forts. Of course he was obeyed, and, as no suspicions had been excited, he was believed to be at the Point, when, in truth, he was making the best of his way along the lovely mountain-river I have endeavoured to describe. The distance to go before he was safe, was seventeen or eighteen miles, for all the commanding points were in the keeping of his injured countrymen. By the aid of great encouragement, his crew (who were deceived by a tale that he was going on board the Vulture with a flag on urgent business) made such exertions as enabled him to get through the lower pass, before the courier with the intelligence of his treason had arrived. Throughout the whole affair, this wretched man, who has acquired a notoriety that promises to be as lasting as that of Erostratus, manifested the utmost coolness and decision.*

Arnold had scarcely got beyond the reach of the cannon on the Point, when Washington, La Fayette, and Knox, another distinguished general, with their several suites, arrived. The commander-in-chief was

* The writer has had the double advantage of listening to the deeply interesting details of La Fayette, and of hearing Arnold's own statement from a British officer, who was present when the latter related his escape at a dinner given in New-York, with an impudence that was scarcely less remarkable than his surprising self-possession.

naturally enough surprised that his host was not at home to receive him. An aide of Arnold (Major Franks) apologized so warmly for the absence of his general, as to create doubts of his own faith, when the facts came to be known. After a short delay, Washington, with most of the company, crossed the river to the fortress. Some surprise was expressed, as they approached the shore, that no movement was seen among the troops; and they landed without the slightest evidence of their being expected visitors. The officer in command soon appeared, and made his excuses for not paying his superior the customary honours, on the ground of ignorance that he was expected. "Is not General Arnold here?" demanded Washington. "No, Sir; we have not seen him on this side of the river to-day." Some amazement was expressed among the generals; but treason was so little in consonance with the feeling of the times, that not the smallest suspicion was even yet excited. Washington continued on the west side of the river, until the hour for dinner was near, when he returned to the abandoned residence of the fugitive, to comply with his engagement of the morning. As the party approached the house, Colonel Hamilton, who had not crossed the river, was seen pacing its court-yard in a high state of excitement. He held in his hands a bundle of papers. He gave the latter to the commander-in-chief, and they retired together. These papers were the plans, &c. found on the person of André, and they fully explained his object, and betrayed the guilt of Arnold. Had not Washington been so near, it is probable that Arnold would have used his authority to liberate the British officer, and then governed his own conduct by circumstances; but the presence of that illustrious man was fated to be of service to his country in more ways than one. As has been seen, the traitor had only time to con-

sult his own selfish apprehensions. He fled like a thief.

La Fayette, still ignorant of what had occurred, was dressing for dinner, when his aide, M'Henry, entered for his pistols. Without explanation, he and Hamilton mounted their horses, and gallopped through the passes of the mountains, in order to interrupt the flight of Arnold. It has since appeared, that the officer in advance (a Colonel Jamieson) had despatched his first messenger with the report that had reached the hands of Arnold before examining the papers, but that he lost no time in repairing the mistake the instant he had perused them. This short interval saved the life of Arnold, and forfeited that of his associate. When Washington and La Fayette met, the former put the report of Jamieson into the hands of the latter, and said, with tears in his eyes, "Arnold is a traitor, and has fled to the British!" General Knox was present at this scene.

Washington now sought an interview with the wife of the traitor. He found her raving, though sensible of his presence and character. She implored him not to injure her, and was so completely under the influence of terror as to beg "he would not murder her child." Commending her to the care of the attendants, he left the room. Notwithstanding the immense stake that was involved in the treason, and his entire ignorance of its extent, the self-possession of this extraordinary man was undisturbed. For a single moment he had appeared to mourn over the moral depravity that could expose so fair a cause to so base an action, but it would have baffled the keenest eye to have traced in his countenance the existence of the slightest alarm. He entered the dining-room calm and dignified as usual, and apologizing for the absence of both host and hostess, he invited the company to be seated. It was only in the course of the entertainment, so extended and complete was the influence

of his collected and imposing manner, that the news of the event was circulated from ear to ear in whispers.

The commandant of the advanced post of the Highlands, at Stony Point, was at hand. This officer (a Colonel Cole) was a warm friend and a *protégé* of Arnold. He had even carried his attachment so far, as to have fought a duel in defence of the traitor's character, but a short time before the exposure of the treason. Washington now sent for him. "Colonel," he said, "we have been deceived in the character of General Arnold; he has betrayed us. Your post may be attacked this very night: go to it without delay, and defend it, as I know you will." This noble confidence was not misplaced. Cole could with difficulty speak. Pressing his hand on his heart, he found words merely to utter—"Your excellency has more than rewarded all I have done, or ever can do for my country," and departed. Is there not something noble, and worthy of the best days of classic recollection, in the single-minded and direct character which marked the events of this glorious contest? One loves to dwell on that integrity, which having been compelled to give credit to one act of baseness, refuses to believe that another can be meditated. I know no fact more honourable to the American character than the one which proves that, notwithstanding the great trust and high character the traitor had once enjoyed, his influence ended the instant he was known to be unworthy of confidence. While on board the Vulture, he essayed in vain to tempt the serjeant and six men, who composed the crew of his own boat, to follow his fortunes, though every offer which might tempt men of their class was resorted to, in order to induce them to change their service. "If General Arnold likes the King of England, let him serve him," said the stubborn serjeant; "*we* love our country, and intend to live or die in support of her cause."

The traitor must have felt the bitter degradation of his fall, even in this simple evidence of his waning power. Exasperated at their refusal, Arnold would have kept them as prisoners, but the English captain was far too honourable to lend himself to so disgraceful a transaction. They returned as they came, under the protection of a flag.

The day passed away in the reflections and precautions such a discovery would be likely to produce. In the evening the barge returned from the Vulture, bearing an insolent letter from the traitor to the commander-in-chief, in which, among other undignified and vain threats, he denounced the vengeance of his new masters, unless certain conditions which he wished to impose, were implicitly regarded. The impetuous character of Washington's native temper is as well known as the unrivalled self-command he had acquired. While his eye glanced over this impudent and characteristic communication from Arnold, it appeared, by his countenance, as if a burst of mighty indignation was about to escape him. Recovering himself as it were by magic, he turned to one of his aides with surprising moderation and dignity, and said, "Go to Mrs. Arnold, and inform her, that, though my duty required no means should be neglected to arrest General Arnold, I have great pleasure in acquainting *her* that he is now safe on board a British vessel of war."

It ought to be added that, while the American government proceeded steadily to their object throughout the rest of this interesting transaction, guided only by their reason, and utterly disregarding the menaces of the English general, the wife of the traitor continued to receive every attention which delicacy could prescribe. She was permitted to go first to her friends in Philadelphia, and soon after was sent, under the protection of a flag, to her husband in New-York. There is something consoling to humanity to find,

even at a moment when war is assuming its most revolting and horrid forms, that principles can be grafted so deeply in our natures, as to leave no fear that the more sacred ties of society shall be in danger of violation, and that the feeble and dependent may be confident of receiving the tenderness and protection which are their due.

The fate of André became an object of the keenest solicitude to both armies. From the commencement of the struggle, to the last hour of its continuance, the American authorities had acted with a moderation and dignity that gave it a character far more noble than that of a rebellion. In no one instance had the war been permitted, on their part, to assume the appearance of a struggle for personal aggrandizement. It was men battling for the known rights of human nature. But a crisis had arrived when it was to be seen whether they would dare to expose the defenceless of their land, to the threatened retaliation of a powerful foe. Such is the wayward feeling of man, that it is far less offensive to his power to kill a general in open conflict, than to lead a subordinate deliberately to an execution, which is sanctioned only by a disputed authority. In the present instance, however, the offender was not only an officer of a high and responsible situation, but he was one who had made himself dear to the army by his amiable qualities, and eminently useful to its commander by his attainments. I think, among men of high and honourable minds, there can be but one opinion concerning the merit of his enterprise. There is something so repugnant to every loyal sentiment in treason, that he who is content to connect himself, ever so remotely, with its baseness, cannot expect to escape altogether from its odium. It is true that public opinion has, of necessity, fixed bounds which military men may approach, without committing their characters for manliness and honour Without this privilege, it is plain that

a general could not arrive at the knowledge which is requisite to enable him to protect his command against attempts, that admit of no other control, than the law of the strongest. But it is also true, that the same sentiment has said it is dangerous to reputation to pass these very limits. Thus, while an officer may communicate with, and employ a spy, he can scarcely with impunity, become a spy himself. There is no doubt that the motive and the circumstances may so far qualify, even more equivocal acts, as to change their moral nature. Thus, Alfred, seeking to vindicate the unquestionable rights of his country, was no less invested with the moral majesty of a king, while wandering through the Danish camp, than when seated on his throne; but it may be permitted to doubt whether the young military aspirant, who sees only his personal preferment in the distance, has a claim to be judged with the same lenity.

Major André was the servant of a powerful and liberal government, that was known never to reward niggardly, and the war in which he served, was waged to aggrandize its power, and not to assert any of the natural rights of man. With doubtful incentives, and for the attainment of such an object, did this accomplished young soldier condescend to prostitute his high acquirements, and to tamper with treason. He did more. He overstepped the coy and reserved distance which conscious dignity preserves, even while it stoops to necessity, and entered familiarly and personally into the details of the disgusting bargain. The mere technicalities of posts and sentinels, though they may be important for the establishment of rules which are to soften the horrors of war, can have but little influence on the moral views of his conduct. The higher the attainments of the individual, the greater must have been the flexibility which could see only the reward in an undertaking like this. As to the commonplace sentiment of serving king and country,

every man of an honest nature must feel that he would have done more honour to his sovereign and to himself by proving to the world, that the high trust he enjoyed was discharged by a man who disdained lending his talents to the miserable work of deception, than by degrading his office, his character, and his name, by blending them all, in such familiar union, with treachery. In short, while it cannot be denied that the office of a spy may be made doubly honourable by its motives, since he who discharges the dangerous duty may have to conquer a deep moral reluctance to its service, no less than the fear of death, I think it must be allowed that the case of Major André was one that can plead no such extraordinary exemption from the common and creditable feeling of mankind.

The Americans were determined to assert the dignity of their government. The question was not one of vengeance, or even one of mere protection from similar dangers in future. It involved the more lofty considerations of sovereignty. It was necessary to show the world that he who dared to assail the rights of the infant and struggling republics, incurred a penalty as fearful as he who worked his treason against the majesty of a king. The calmness, the humanity, the moderation, and the inflexible firmness, with which this serious duty was performed, are worthy of all praise. While the English general was vainly resorting to menaces, the American authorities were pro ceeding with deliberation to their object. A feeling of universal compassion was excited in favour of him who had been captured, which probably received some portion of its intenseness from the general indignation against him who had escaped. While the necessity of an example, in an offence as grave as this, was felt by all, it required no peculiar moral vision to see that the real criminal was free. Some time is said to have been lost, during which Wash-

ington had reasonable hopes of capturing Arnold,* in which case he intended that justice should be appeased by one victim. But this plan was frustrated by an unforeseen occurrence, and then it became necessary to let the law take its course.

It has often been erroneously stated, that, anxious to vindicate himself in the eyes of foreign nations, Washington employed the European generals in the service, on the court which was to decide the fate of André. *Every* general officer in his army was a member, and the foreigners were necessarily included.

Whatever might have been the original error of André, in accepting a duty of so doubtful a nature, there is but one opinion of his subsequent conduct. It was highly noble and manly. The delicacy of the court, and his own frankness, were alike admirable. Though admonished to say nothing that might commit himself, he disdained subterfuge, or even concealment. A pretence had been set up by the British general, that he had entered the American ranks, under the protection of a flag. He was asked if he himself had entertained such an opinion. "Had I come with a flag, I might have returned with a flag;" was his noble answer. He had landed at the entrance of the Highlands, and at a point where a sentinel had not been posted for a long time. It was thought, in the army, that Arnold had caused a sentinel to be posted there anew as a precaution of safety, in the case of detection. He might have pretended that his only object was to entrap his enemy. André himself confessed, that when hailed by this sentinel, he thought himself lost. This confession, alone, had other proofs been wanting, was enough to show his own opinion of the legal character of his enterprise. He proceeded, however, and was conducted by Arnold farther into

* See History of Serjeant Champe, in Lee's Memoirs.

the works, (how far is not known,) and then, he concluded, after having confessed these circumstances himself, "I was induced to put on this wretched coat!" laying his hand on the sleeve of the disguise he had assumed. The opinion of the court was unanimous: he was judged to come perfectly within the technical denomination of a spy, and was sentenced to meet the fate of one.

After his condemnation, Major André received every possible indulgence. A fruitless negotiation took place between the adverse generals, with a hope, on the part of Clinton, to intimidate, and on the part of Washington in order to manifest a spirit of moderation, no less than to give the time necessary to complete the plan to arrest the arch-traitor. It was once suggested to André that he might still be exchanged for Arnold. "If Arnold could—" said Hamilton, who made the proffer. "Stop," returned the condemned man, "such a proposition can never come from *me*."

There is reason to think that André had soothed himself in the earlier part of his captivity, with hopes that were fated to be deceived. It had been the misfortune of the English to undervalue the Americans, and it is quite in nature for a young man, who, it is well known, had often indulged in bitter sarcasms against enemies he despised, to believe that a nation he held so cheap, must have some of his own awe of a government and a power he thought invincible It is certain he always spoke of Sir Henry Clinton (the English commander-in-chief) with the affection and confidence of a child, until he received his last letter, which he read in much agitation, thrust into his pocket, and never afterwards mentioned his general's name. He confessed his ancient prejudices, but admitted they were all removed by the tender treatment he had received. He neither acknowledged nor denied the justice of his sentence. It is known,

that though he experienced a momentary shock at finding he was to suffer on a gallows, he met his death heroically, and died amid the tears of all present.

There were in England (naturally enough perhaps) many who affected to believe this execution had sullied the fair character of Washington. But these miserable moralists and their opinions have passed away; and while they are consigned to oblivion together, the fame they thought to have impeached is brightening, as each day proves how difficult it is to imitate virtues so rare. Among impartial and intelligent men, this very act of dignity and firmness, tempered as it was by so much humanity, adds to the weight of his imposing character.

We came-to at West Point, where La Fayette landed amid a magnificent uproar of echoes, which repeated, from the surrounding mountains, the quick discharges of a small park of artillery. The great military school of the republic is established here. The buildings stand on an elevated plain, which is washed by the river on two of its sides, and is closely environed with rocky mountains on the others. It is altogether a wild and picturesque scene, equalling in beauty almost any that I remember to have visited. Perhaps a better site could not possibly have been selected for the purpose to which it is at present devoted, than West Point. The *élèves*, who are to all intents young soldiers, enjoy, by means of the river, and the great number of steam-boats that pass and repass each hour of the day, the advantage of speedy communication with the largest town in the country, while they are as completely secluded by their nearly inaccessible mountains, as can be desired. It is quite common for travellers to pass a few hours at this spot; a circumstance which affords to the cadets the incentive of a constant interest in their establishment, on the part of the better portion of the community, while they are completely protected from the danger of

intercourse with the worst. The discipline, order, neatness, respectability, and scientific progress of the young men, are all admirable. It is scarcely saying too much to add, that perhaps no similar institution in the world is superior. In Europe the military student may enjoy some means of instruction that cannot be obtained here, (though scarcely in the schools,) but, on the other hand, there are high moral advantages, that are peculiar to this country. As detailed reports, however, are annually made concerning the state of this school, it is unnecessary for me to enter into a more minute account of the situation in which I found it. I shall therefore content myself with adding, that there are between two and three hundred students, who devote four years to the school, that they undergo numberless severe examinations, and that those who are found wanting are invariably dismissed, without fear or favour, while those who pass are as regularly commissioned to serve in the army of the confederation.

TO THE COMTE JULES DE BÉTHIZY,

&c. &c.

New-York, ———

Neither the geographical situation of the United States, nor the habits of their citizens, are very favourable to the formation of a military character. Though the republic has actually been engaged in six wars, since the year 1776, only two have been of a nature to require the services of land troops in the field. The two struggles with England were close, and always, for the number engaged in the

combats, obstinate and bloody, but the episode of a war with France in 1799, the two with Algiers, and that with Tripoli, only gave occasion for the courage and skill of the marine.

By studying the character of the people, and by looking closely into their history, it will be found that they contain the elements to form the best of troops. In point of *physique* they are certainly not surpassed. So far as the eye can judge, I should say that men of great stature and strength are about as common in America as elsewhere; while small men are more rare. I am much inclined to think that the aggregate of mere animal force would be found to be somewhat above the level of Europe in its best parts. This is not at all surprising, when one remembers the excellence and abundance of nutriment which is within the reach of the very poorest. Though little men are, without doubt, seen here, they are by no means as frequent as in England, in the southern provinces of France, in Italy, Austria, and indeed almost every where else.*

As might be expected, the military qualities which the Americans have hitherto exhibited, are more resembling those which distinguish the individual character of the soldier, than those higher attainments which mark an advanced knowledge of the art of war. As courage in its best aspect is a moral attribute, a nation of freemen must always be comparatively brave. In that collective energy which is the fruit of discipline, the Americans, except in a few instances, have been sadly deficient; but in that personal spirit, for which discipline is merely a substitute, they have as often been remarkable. They are certainly the only people who have been known to resist, with repeated success, in their character of armed citizens,

* The writer afterwards found what he is almost tempted to call a race of big men in the south-western States.

the efforts of the disciplined troops of modern times. The militia and national guards of Europe should not be compared to the militia of America, for the former have always been commanded and drilled by experienced soldiers; while the latter, though regularly officered, have been led to the field by men in all respects as ignorant as themselves. And yet, when placed in situations to rely on their personal efforts, and on their manual dexterity in the use of arms, they have often been found respectable, and sometimes stubborn and unconquerable enemies.

The investigation of this subject has led me, perhaps, into a singular comparison. At the great battle of Waterloo, the actual English force in the field is said to have been 36,000 men. These troops undauntedly bore the assault of perhaps rather more than an equal number. This assault was supported by a tremendous train of artillery, and directed by the talents of the greatest captain of the age. It endured, including the cannonading of the artillery, for at least five hours. The official account of the British loss is 9,999 men, killed and wounded. At the affair of Bunker's hill, the Americans might have had between 2,000 and 2,500 yeomen actually engaged Though these men were marshalled in companies their captains knew little more of military service than the men themselves. There was positively no commander, in the usual sense of the word. The aptitude of these people soon enables them to assume the form of an army; but it is plain that nothing except practice can impart the habits necessary to create good troops. At Bunker's hill, they enjoyed, in their preliminary proceedings, the advantage of a certain degree of order and method, that elevated them something, it is true, above an armed mob; but it is probable that they could not have made, with any tolerable accuracy, a single complicated movement at their greatest leisure, much less in the confusion of a com-

bat. Just so far, then, as the ability to place themselves behind their imperfect defences with a certain military front was an advantage, they might be deemed soldiers; but in all other respects they were literally the ordinary inhabitants of the country, with very indifferent fire-arms in their hands. A great deal has been said of the defences and of the position of Bunker's hill. It is not possible to conceive a redoubt better situated for an assault than the little mound of earth in question. It could be approached within a short distance with perfect impunity, and might easily be turned. It *was* approached in this manner, and it *was* turned. As to the rail fences on the level land beneath, where much of the combat was fought, and where the British were twice repulsed with terrible loss, the defences were rather ideal than positive. Now, against this force, and thus posted, the English general directed 3,000 of his best troops. His attack was supported by field artillery, by the fire of a heavy battery on an adjacent height, and by that of several vessels of war. The Americans were incapable of making any movements to profit by the trifling advantages their position did afford, and they had no artillery. They merely remained stationary to await the assault, relying solely on that quality of moral firmness, and on that aptitude which it is the object of this statement to elucidate by a comparison of the results of this combat with the results of Waterloo. The English made three different attacks. Their average continuance under the fire of the Americans was less than fifteen minutes. Their loss was certainly 1056 men, and possibly more, for it is not probable that their general would be fond, under the peculiar circumstances, of proclaiming its full extent Here, then, assuming our data to be true, (and that they are substantially so I fully believe,) we have a greater comparative loss produced by 2,500 husbandmen, armed solely with muskets, in

forty-five minutes, than was produced by all the reiterated and bloody attacks at Waterloo. After making the necessary deductions for the difference in effect between great and small numbers, it will be found that there is something peculiar in the destruction occasioned by the peaceful citizens of this country. I should not have drawn this comparison, if it were not to demonstrate what I believe to be one of the inevitable consequences of the general dissemination of thought in a people. The same directness of application is observable in the manner that the American handles his arms, as in handling his plough. The battles of this country, both by sea and land, when there has been sufficient inducement to make their undisciplined bodies fight at all, have always been distinguished for their destruction. Many of their officers have been so certain of the fatal effects of their own fire as to have implored their men (militia) to give but two or three discharges, and they would answer for the victory with their heads. No doubt they often failed in their entreaties, for the history of their wars is full of frank and manly acknowledgments of cases in which the militia yielded to the force of nature; but it is also full of instances in which their eloquence or influence had more effect, and these have always proved fatally destructive to their enemies. The battle of New-Orleans will furnish a subject for a similar comparison.

There is another point of view, in which it is consolatory to study the short military history of this country. The States of New-England, in which information has been so generally diffused, have always been the most dangerous to assail. A powerful force (for the times and the duty) was, in the war of 1775, early driven disgracefully from their soil by the people of New-England. It is true, rapid, predatory excursions were afterwards made in the country, but always under the protection of a superior naval force,

and with the most jealous watchfulness of detention. The only time that an army of any magnitude was trusted to manœuvre near their borders for a campaign, it was assailed, surrounded, and captured. Such are the fruits of intelligence, disseminated among a people, that, while it adds to all their sources of enjoyment, it gives a double security to their possession.

It would be vain to deny the excellence of the American troops when properly equipped and disciplined. If the English soldiers are admitted to be as good as common, the Americans are equal to the best. I have examined with deep interest the annals of both their wars, and I can find but a solitary instance in which (other things being equal) their *disciplined* troops have been defeated in open combat. Their generals have often been out-manœuvred and deservedly disgraced; but their disciplined soldiers, when fairly engaged, have, except in the case named (Hobkirk's hill,) invariably done well. The instances in which drilled soldiers have been left to their own efforts, are certainly rare, compared to those in which they have been blended with nominal regulars and militia; but they are sufficiently numerous to show the qualities of the troops. I refer you to the affairs of Cowpens, Eutaw, and to the whole war of the south, under Greene, which was almost all the service that was exclusively done with drilled men in the revolution, and to the battles on the Niagara, during the late war. There are also many instances in which the regular troops (drilled men) did excellent service, in battles where they were defeated in consequence of being too few to turn the fate of the day.

It is another evidence of the effects of general intelligence, that, disciplined or not, the Americans are always formidable when entrenched. They have been surprised (not as often, perhaps, as they have surprised,) taken by siege, though rarely, and frequently dis-

graced by the want of ability in their chiefs, but seldom carried by open assault. Indeed, I can find but one instance of the latter (if Bunker's hill be excepted, where they retreated for want of ammunition, after repelling the English as long as they had it,) in a case of any importance, and in that the assault partook of the nature of a surprise (Fort Montgomery.) There are fifty instances, on the contrary, in which they have given their foes a rough reception, both against attacks by land and by sea. Bunker's hill was certainly a victory, while the means of resistance lasted. To these may be added, the affairs of New-Orleans, Fort Mifflin, Fort Moultrie, Sandusky, Red Bank, Tiger River, Fort Erie, and numberless others.

With this brief review of their military character, which does not stand as high as it deserves, merely because there has been a sad dearth of efficient leaders, capable of conducting operations on a concerted and extensive scale, I think you will agree with me that the Americans are not in much danger of being the victims of a conquest. They turn the idea themselves into high ridicule. Some of them go so far as to assert, that Europe, united, could not subdue a people so remote, so free, and protected by so many natural advantages. It is very certain, that whatever Europe might do now, she could not overturn this republic, if it shall remain united, fifty years hence.

The Americans seem quite determined that a future war shall not find them so entirely without preparation as the last. In the great concerns of the day, few of us, in Europe, had time or inclination to lend our attention to the details of that war; and with the exception of the actors, and perhaps a few of the leading events, little is known of it, even by the English who were parties to the struggle. As I intend to close this chapter with a brief account of the present military system of the United States, it may be well to

revert to the means they employed in their two former contests.

The insurrection of 1775, was commenced under every military disadvantage. It is a well-known fact that Washington kept the British army beleaguered in Boston, with an undisciplined force not always numerically superior, and which was for a long period so destitute of ammunition, that it could not have maintained a sharp conflict of half an hour. Yet the high resolution of this people supported them in the field, not as an enthusiastic and momentarily excited mob, but as grave and thoughtful men, intently bent on their object, and who knew how to assume such an aspect of order and method, in the midst of all their wants, as should and did impose on their skilful and brave enemies. Some minute calculations may be useful in furnishing a correct opinion of that contest, and, of course, in enabling us to judge of the effects which intelligence (the distinctive property of the American community) has on the military character of a nation.

In the year 1790, there were in the United States 814,000 white males over the age of sixteen (fractions are excluded.) It is known that the population of the country has doubled in about twenty-three years. This calculation should give 407,000 of the same description of males, in the year 1767; or about 600,000 in the year 1779, which was the epoch when the final issue of the revolution might be said to have been decided by the capture of Burgoyne. If we deduct for age, physical disabilities, religious scruples, (as among the Quakers,) and disaffection to the cause, 100,000, a number probably greatly within the truth, we shall have half a million of men capable of bearing arms, to resist the power of Britain. I am sensible that this enumeration rather exceeds than falls short of the truth. England employed, at one time,

not less than fifty thousand soldiers to reduce the revolted colonies, and she was in possession of all the strong holds of the country, at the commencement of the contest. The half million, badly armed, without supplies, discipline, money, or scarcely any other requisite but resolution, were scattered over a wide surface, a fact which, though, *with* their intelligence, and determination, it was favourable to their success, *without* it would have assured their defeat in detail. The formidable army of their enemies was sustained by the presence of powerful fleets; was led by experienced generals, and always fought bravely, and with perfect good will. Yet what was it able to perform? From New-England, the only portion of the whole country where a tolerably dense population existed, a great force was early expelled in disgrace. A few cities on the sea-coast were held by strong garrisons, which rarely ventured out with success. The only great expedition attempted in the north, was signally defeated. In the middle districts, marches of one or two hundred miles were made, it is true, and several battles were fought, commonly to the advantage of discipline and numbers; but in the only instance where an extended chain of communication was attempted, it was destroyed by the vigour of Washington. In the south, a scattered population, and the presence of slaves, allowed a temporary, but a treacherous success. Reverses soon followed; the conquered territory was regained, and triumph ensued This is a summary of the outline of that war. If to the soldiers, be added the seamen of the fleet, a species of force nearly, or quite, as useful in such a war as the troops, there could scarcely be less than 80,000 men employed in endeavouring to reduce the malcontents. When the magnitude of the stake, and the power of Britain, be considered, this number will scarcely appear sufficient. Here, then, admitting these estimates to be just, you have a regular, com-

bined and disciplined force of 30,000 men, aided by large bodies of the disaffected to the American cause, contending against an unprovided, scattered, population of half a million of males, who had to resist, to till their land, and to discharge all the customary obligations of society. The aid of the French was certainly of great use to shorten the conflict; but the men who had gone through the dark period of 1776, '77, and '78, and who had cleared the southern and eastern States, by their own exertions, were not likely to submit to a power they had so often baffled.

In the war of 1812, the country was much better provided, though still miserably defective in military preparation, and in scientific knowledge. The whole population was about 8,000,000, and, though joined as one man on the subject of independence, and the maintenance of territory, nearly equally divided on the question of the policy of the war. A capital blunder was committed at the very commencement of the struggle. Instead of placing young and talented men at the head of the armies, officers of the revolution were sought for to fill those situations. The Greenes, the Waynes, the Lincolns, Knoxes, &c. of that war had followed, or preceded, their great chief to the tomb, and few or none were left, of sufficient distinction, to yield a pledge for their future usefulness. The very fact that a man had served in a revolution without *éclat*, should have been *prima facie* evidence of his incapacity. Still, ancient officers, who had commanded regiments, or battalions, in the war of 1770, were thought preferable to those who had acquired their information in studying the more modern tactics. The result proved as might be expected. Not a single officer of the old school (one excepted) did any thing to justify his appointment, while several of them inflicted heavy disgraces on the arms of the country. The exception was General Jackson, who was far too young to have arrived

at eminence in the revolution, and who gained his renown by departing from the Fabian policy of that struggle, instead of pursuing it.

The last war commenced in the middle of 1812, and terminated at the commencement of 1815. With the usual exceptions of personal enterprise and courage, the two first campaigns were disgraceful, expensive, and unmilitary. But time was already beginning to correct the blunders of a fatal prejudice, or rather fatal partiality. Men of character and talents forced themselves into notice; and although there existed, in the conceptions of the manner in which the war was to be conducted, a most lamentable impotency in the cabinet, the campaign of 1814 was brilliant in achievement. With the solitary exception of a rapid expedition to Washington, through a barren and nearly uninhabited country, the English were not successful in a single attempt of any importance. Four bloody affairs were fought on the Niagara, to the advantage of the Americans; formidable invasions on the north and on the south were successfully, and, in one instance, brilliantly repelled; and, in fine, the troops of the confederation, better drilled, and better led, began to exhibit some of the finest qualities of first-rate soldiers. There is no doubt that England nobly maintained her colonies, which, of necessity, became the disputed point in such a war; but it is just as true, that so soon as, encouraged by finding herself unexpectedly released from her great European struggle, she attempted conquest in her turn, she was quite as signally foiled.

Another quarter of a century may be necessary to raise the United States to the importance of a first rate power, in the European sense. At the end of that time, their population will be about 25,000,000, which, though not compact, according to our ideas, will be sufficiently available for all military purposes, by means of the extraordinary facilities of intercom-

munication that already exist, and are hourly increasing in the country. I think, before that period arrives, the republic will be felt as a military (or, more properly, a naval) power, in the affairs of christendom. What she will become before the end of the century, must depend more on herself than on any thing the rest of the world can do to forward, or to retard, the result.

The present military condition of the United States, though far from imposing, is altogether more respectable than it has ever before been. One who is accustomed to see kings manœuvre large bodies of household troops as their ordinary playthings, might smile to be told that the whole army of this great republic contains but 6,000 men. The Bourbons seldom lie down, dear Count, without as strong a force to watch their slumbers. But he who estimates the power of this people to injure, or to resist, by the number of its regular troops, makes a miserable blunder. The habit of discipline and the knowledge of military details are kept alive by the practice of this small force. They are chiefly employed on the western frontier, or they garrison, by companies, the posts on the seaboard. They answer all the objects of preserving order on the one, and of guarding the public property in the other. But the vast improvement of the country is in the progress, and in the gradual diffusion of professional knowledge. All the subordinate ranks in this little army are filled by young men, who have received rigid military educations, tempered by a morality, and a deference to the institutions of the land, that are elsewhere little cultivated, and which tend to elevate the profession, by rendering a soldier strictly the support, and not the master of the community.

It is not probable that the jealousy of the Americans will ever admit of the employment of a very large regular force in time of peace. They prefer

trusting to the care of armed citizens. Though the militia never can be, compared with its numbers, as formidable as disciplined troops, it is certainly sufficient to maintain order, and to resist invasion. With respect to the two latter objects, you may possibly believe that America is peculiarly favoured by her geographical situation. It is scarcely fair for governments to refuse to give a population the necessary degree of intelligence, and then to say it will be dangerous to entrust them with arms. We know that a child may do mischief with a weapon, but we also know that Nature has decreed that the time shall come when it may be made highly useful to him. For my part, I firmly believe, that if Europe would put the school-book into one hand, the other might be safely trusted with the musket. It is commonly the interest of the vast majority in every nation to preserve order; and they will certainly do it best, if the means are freely furnished. When the interests of the majority are in favour of a change, there is something very like true wisdom and justice in permitting it. Fancy, for a moment, twelve or fifteen millions, resembling the population of New-England, in possession of a sufficient territory in the heart of Europe, every man with a musket, a reasonable supply of military munitions in readiness, and a moderate, disciplined force to furnish the nucleus of a regular army. What nation could hope to invade them with success? It is very true that the King of Prussia, now, is probably more dangerous to his neighbours than he would be at the head of such a nation; but a good deal of the truth of all these questions lies in the fact, whether a nation is any the better for being externally so very formidable. Three or four communities, intelligent, content with their condition, and intrusted with arms, like the Americans, properly dispersed over the surface of Europe, would be sufficient to insure the tranquillity of one quarter of the globe of themselves. It is

odd enough that the world should have been contending so long about the balance of power, without hitting on the cheapest mode of effecting it. Ink costs far less than gunpowder; and no reasonable man can doubt that, if properly expended, it would go farther, in one generation, to establish the natural and useful boundaries of nations, than rivers of blood. It is not a century since the fate of the British empire was decided by less than twenty thousand soldiers. It became Protestant, when it might have been Catholic. Here was a balance of power, so far as England and her dependencies were concerned, settled by a handfull of men. It would require Europe united to do the same thing over again, and all because new generations have acquired more liberal ideas of their natural rights. And yet England is far, in this particular, very far, from what she might be. Even this country has still a great deal to do in advancing the mighty work of education.

We have an obstinate habit of insisting that, though America is prospering with all her freedom and economy, her system would be fatal to any European nation. I once ventured to assert this position to my travelling friend, who met my opinion by bluntly asking—"How do you know it? In what age, or in what country, did you ever try the experiment? I grant that certain desperate political adventures have been attempted, in which a few good men have joined a great many bad ones, in overturning governments, and that the mockery of liberty has been assumed by the latter, until it suited their convenience to throw aside the mask, and then tyranny has succeeded to the temporary deception, as a perfect matter of course. But so far as the experience of Europe goes, and considering the question altogether in a military point of view, I think it will be found that the freest nations have, *cæteris paribus*, always been found the most difficult to conquer. I might quote Scotland.

Holland, and Switzerland, in favour of this theory. You will say, perhaps, that the first and the last were more indebted for their independence to their peculiar condition and poverty than to any actual political institutions, more particularly the former. Granted. And yet you find that it is only necessary to make a man feel a direct interest in preserving his actual condition to make him resolute in defending it. One would think there was far less to fight for in the hills of Scotland, than in the plains of Italy; and yet Italy has been overrun a hundred times by invaders, and Scotland never. But you think the hills and the fastnesses composed the strength of Scotland and Wales. No doubt they added; but will any man accuse the Netherlands, particularly Holland, of being a mountainous country? Do you think Napoleon would have ventured to march his vast army into a country so remote from France as Russia, had the latter been peopled with 20,000,000 of Americans, and had even the climate been as temperate as that of Paris? What were the facts in similar invasions, though certainly on a greatly lessened scale? Ten or twelve thousand yeomen, intermingled with a few regular troops, who were animated by the same spirit, intercepted and destroyed Burgoyne, at the head of ten thousand regulars, who were quite as good troops as any in the imperial guard. Prevost, at the head of an admirable force of many thousand men, who had been fighting the best battles of Europe, was checked by a handfull of countrymen, and would have shared the fate of Burgoyne near the same spot, had he not been timely admonished to make a disgraceful retreat, by the fortune of his predecessor. Jackson, with some five or six thousand Tennesseans, Kentuckians, and Louisianians, did not even permit his enemy to involve himself in the difficulties of a distant retreat. The situation of a wealthy city required that the spirit of these freemen should be shown in its front; and well

did they make it known. A similar fate would have attended the excursion to Washington, had time been given for arrangement, and the collection of a force sufficient for the object. But the experience of even the most despotic governments goes to show how much more formidable they become, when each man is made to believe it is his interest to resist aggression."

But the Americans appear sensible, that while the irresistible force of every nation exists in giving all of its citizens the deepest possible interest in its welfare, they do not neglect such rational means of rendering their numbers as effective as may be, without rendering the system of defence unnecessarily burthensome. There can be no doubt, that in this respect at least the republic is greatly favoured by its geographical position. Removed from all the ordinary dangers of external aggression, the country is able to advance in its career of improvement, with the freedom of a child, whose limbs are permitted to grow, and whose chest expands, unshackled by the vicious effects of swaddlings, or any other artificial correctives.

Compared with its state in 1812, the present military condition of the United States presents the following points of difference. Instead of possessing a few indifferently educated graduates of an infant military school, it has now hundreds, who have long enjoyed the advantages of far higher instruction. The corps of engineers, in particular, is rapidly improving, and is already exceedingly respectable. A system of order and exactitude has been introduced into the police and commissariat of the army, which will serve to render any future force doubly effective, and which may be readily extended to meet the exigencies of the largest armies. Formidable fortresses have been erected, or are in progress of erection, which will give security to most of the coast, and

protection to the commerce of the country. By the aid of canals and great roads, armies on the frontiers can now be supplied at one sixth of the former cost, and in half the time. Arms, artillery, and all the munitions of war, woollen and cotton clothing, in short, the whole materiel of an army, could now be furnished in the country at a reasonable cost; whereas, as late as 1812, the Americans were so entirely dependent on their enemy for a supply, that regiments were absolutely unable to march for want of so simple an article as blankets. The population has advanced from 8 to 12,000,000, and the revenue in even a greater proportion. The debt is in about the same ratio to the inhabitants as before the war; but as the expenditures are not increased in the proportion of the revenue, it is in the course of rapid extinguishment. A very few years more of peace will effect this desirable object.*

It is a mistaken idea that the Americans are a people so much engaged in commerce as to be indifferent to the nicer points of national honour and military renown. It is far more true to describe them as a people who have hitherto been removed from the temptation of aggression, and in whom the native principles of justice have, in consequence, never been weakened. One hears a great deal in France, among the upper classes, of the French honour, and in England of British character, &c. &c.; but neither of these nations has ever manifested one half the jealous watchfulness of their rights as these simple republicans. They dared the war of their independence in the maintenance of a perfectly abstract principle, for no one pretends that the taxation of England was oppressive in fact; and at this hour, it becomes very necessary for the graver heads of the nation to temper

* The average amount of customs for ten years before the war, a little exceeded 12,000,000 of dollars a year; it may now be stated at about 20,000,000.

the public mind, at the smallest rumour of any assault on their dignity or national character. The politicians are moderate, because they see that aggression bears an aspect with them different from that which it assumes towards other people. An aggression by England, for instance, on America, is much like an insult offered by a man to a boy. The latter may bear it, because he can say to himself, the other will not dare to repeat it next year. Thus the American politician reasons, or rather has reasoned, that time is all-important to them. Nations do not often go to war for indemnity, but to maintain established rights by showing spirit and force, or for conquest. Conquest the Americans do not need, and there is no fear of injuries growing into precedent against a people who are rich, out of debt, free, intelligent, intrinsically brave, however prudent they may be, and who in fifty years will number 50,000,000! I think, however, that the spirit of the people rather runs ahead of their actual force, than otherwise. Perhaps their revolution was twenty years too soon; and now, though lovers of peace, and frequently religiously indisposed to war, it is quite easy to see that they chafe, to a man, at the idea of any invasion on what they deem their natural rights.

It may serve to give you an idea of the different attitude which this country takes in 1825, from what it maintained in 1812, by stating two facts. It is well known that thousands of their citizens were impressed, with impunity, into the British navy before the latter period. There was a false rumour the other day, that a similar act had occurred on the coast of Africa. I heard but one opinion on the subject. "We must have explanation and justice without delay." Cad, wallader says, that he can hardly imagine a case in which two or three impressments (unless subject to clear explanations) would not now produce a war. The rumour, that England was to become mistress

of Cuba, has also been circulated during my visit. I have sought opportunities to demand the consequences. The answer has been, at least five times in six, "war."

It is not difficult to see, that the day is at hand when this republic will be felt in the great general political questions of christendom. It may then be fortunate for humanity, that the mighty power she will shortly wield, is not to be exercised to satisfy the ambition of individuals, but that they who will have to bear the burthen of the contests, will also have a direct influence on their existence. Neither the institutions, nor the necessities of America, are ominous of a thirst for conquest; but, with her widely-spread commerce, it will be impossible to avoid frequent and keen collisions with other nations. I think, for a long time to come, that her armies will be chiefly confined to the defensive; but another and a very different question presents itself, when we turn our attention towards her fleets.

TO SIR EDWARD WALLER, BART.

&c. &c.

New-York, ——

After having ascended the Hudson as far as Albany, in company with La Fayette, and taken our leave of the veteran, our faces were turned west. At that place we saw a few remaining evidences of the Dutch, in the names and in the construction of a good many houses; but the city (containing about 16,000 inhabitants) is chiefly modern. Our route, for sixty or seventy miles, was along one of the great thorough-

fares of the interior, when we inclined to the south, and having traversed a considerable tract of country to the southward of the beaten track of travellers, we entered the State of Pennsylvania, west of the Susquehannah, and proceeded to Pittsburgh. Thence we descended the Alleghany river to the Ohio, made a wide circuit in the State of the same name, and returned, by the way of Lake Erie, to Buffalo (in New-York), which is a thriving fresh-water lake-port. We spent, of course, a few days examining the mighty cataract of Niagara, and in visiting the shores of Lake Ontario. On our return east, we followed the line of the great canal as far as Utica, where we made a diversion towards the north, for a couple of hundred miles, in order to permit Cadwallader to visit an estate of which he is proprietor. This duty performed, we made our way along the skirts of a wild and nearly uninhabited region, to the famous watering places at Saratoga and Ballstown; passed the Hudson at Troy, and crossing a spur of the Green Mountains, penetrated Massachusetts by its western border; traversed a small portion of Connecticut in a new direction; re-entered New-York above the Highlands, through which we journeyed by land, and regained this city, after an absence of about six weeks. We must have travelled, by land and water, between twelve and fifteen hundred miles.

The three States named, are computed to cover a surface of about 131,000 square miles; being a little larger than the two islands of Great Britain and Ireland united. Their population, at the present time, must be something short of four millions.* If we fix it at

* In 1820, the population of these three States, by the general census, was 3,003,614. But State censuses have since been taken in several of the States. The Government of the United States causes a census to be taken once in ten years, commencing with the year 1790. By this estimate the Representatives for Congress are apportioned. When the States cause the inter-

3,800,000, which is probably near the truth, it will leave rather more than twenty souls to the square mile. This is perhaps a little short of the rate of the population of Russia in Europe, and more than one half greater than that of the kingdom of Sweden, exclusive of Norway. But the same remark is applicable to those States, as that which has already been made of New-England. There is a vast district in the northern portion of New-York, which is not, nor probably will not, for ages, be inhabited, except by a few hunters and lumber-men.* It must, however, be remembered, that these States possess two second-rate towns—New-York and Philadelphia: the former of which contains 200,000, and the latter 150,000 inhabitants.† Those portions of New-York and Pennsylvania which lie in their eastern sections, have an air of populousness about equal to that already described as belonging to New-England. The same appearances are preserved by travelling on many of the great routes to the interior, and there are numberless counties, especially in New-York, extending from its centre very nearly to its western border, which not only appear, but which in truth are more populous than many of the older districts. After having left the Hudson some fifty or sixty miles, the most material points of difference between the external aspect of New-England and of these States, are in the newness and freshness of the buildings, orchards, &c. &c., and in the greater recurrence of forest, or

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mediate census to be taken, it is to answer the objects of their internal policy. The representatives for the State legislative bodies are frequently altered to meet the results. The census of 1820 gave New-York 1,372,812 inhabitants; that of 1825, 1,616,000; the increase has been greatest, however, in the newer State of Ohio, which has nearly doubled its population in the few intervening years.

* Men who fell the trees, and convert them into the various objects of use, such as staves, shingles, &c.

† 1828.

of comparatively half-formed establishments, in the latter than in the former.

You will always remember that the American, in seeking a spot for his establishment, has great scope for his election; and that, in consequence, he invariably seeks the more fertile lands, or such spots as afford desirable facilities for commerce or manufactures. Thus, valleys are occupied in succession frequently for a hundred miles, while the crests of the mountains are left in the forest; the fields of the husbandman gradually climbing their sides, as his growing riches or greater necessities shall tempt him to apply the axe. Some of the best of the land, and many of the best agriculturists, however, are often found on the summits of hills of a few hundred feet in elevation. I think it is rather a peculiarity in American scenery, that the mountains are, in common, less abrupt, and more easily to be tilled, than with us. This is a circumstance which adds to their usefulness what it subtracts from their beauty. But where such a variety of natural formation, no less than of artificial improvement, exists in a country, it is not easy to convey very accurate ideas of its appearance, in a few words. The exceptions are so numerous as to confound the images. You will know how to make the proper allowances for my imperfect descriptions, and I shall therefore pursue them, in the confidence that I am addressing a man who will not believe that a bear is to be seen in a dwelling, because he was told one was met in a forest at no great distance from the place where it stands. This confusion of ideas is the blunder of Europeans, in picturing their images of American scenery as well as of republican manners. They hear of churches, academies, wild beasts, savages, beautiful women, steam-boats, and ships; and, by means of a very superficial process, I am satisfied that nine in ten contract opinions which bring wolf, beauty, churches,

and *sixty*-gun frigates in strange and fantastic collision. Now, when one is in a thriving settlement, or succession of settlements, in what is called the new country, (and they are seen by thousands every where), the only difference between the aspect of things here and in Europe, is in the freshness of objects, the absence of ancient monuments, the ordinary national differences in usages and arrangement, an air of life and business, always in favour of America, and a few peculiarities which blend the conveniences of civilized life with the remains of the wilderness, in a manner that I shall shortly attempt to describe.

Once for all, dear Waller, I wish you to understand that—a few peaceable and half-civilized remains of tribes, that have been permitted to reclaim small portions of land, excepted—an inhabitant of New-York is actually as far removed from a savage as an inhabitant of London. The former has to traverse many hundred leagues of territory to enjoy even the sight of an Indian, in a tolerably wild condition; and the latter may obtain a similar gratification at about the same expense of time and distance, by crossing the ocean to Labrador. A few degraded descendants of the ancient warlike possessors of this country are indeed seen wandering among the settlements, but the Indian must now be chiefly sought west of the Mississippi, to be found in any of his savage grandeur.

Cases do occur, beyond a doubt, in which luckless individuals are induced to make their settlement in some unpropitious spot where the current of emigration obstinately refuses to run. These subjects of an unfortunate speculation are left to struggle for years in a condition between rude civilization, and one approaching to that of the hunter, or to abandon their possessions, and to seek a happier section of the country. Nine times in ten, the latter course is adopted. But when this tide of emigration has set

steadily towards any favoured point for a reasonable time, it is absurd to seek for any vestige of a barbarous life among the people. The emigrants carry with them (I now speak of those parts of the country I have seen) the wants, the habits, and the institutions, of an advanced state of society. The shop of the artisan is reared simultaneously with the rude dwelling of the farmer. The trunks of trees, piled on each other, serve for both for a few years, and then succeed dwellings of wood, in a taste, magnitude, and comfort, that are utterly unknown to men of similar means in any other quarter of the world, which it has yet been my lot to visit. The little school-house is shortly erected at some convenient point, and a tavern, a store, (the American term for a shop of all sales,) with a few tenements occupied by mechanics, soon indicate the spot for a church, and the site of the future village. From fifty or a hundred of these centres of exertion, spread swarms that in a few years shall convert mazes of dark forests into populous, wealthy, and industrious counties. The manufactures of Europe, of the Indies, and of China, are seen exposed for sale, by the side of the coarse products of the country; and the same individual who vends the axe to fell the adjoining forest, can lay before your eyes a very tolerable specimen of Lyons silk, of English broadcloth, of Nankins, of teas, of coffees, or indeed of most of the more common luxuries of life. The number and quality of the latter increase with the growth of the establishment, and it is not too much to say, that an American village store, in a thriving part of the country, where the settlements are of twenty years' standing, can commonly supply as good an assortment of the manufactures of Europe, as a collection of shops in any European country town; and, if the general nature of their stock be considered, embracing, as it does, some of the products of all countries, one much greater.

As to wild beasts, savages, &c. &c. &c., they have no existence in these regions. A solitary bear, or panther, or even a wolf, wandering near the flocks of a country twenty years old, has an effect like that produced by an invasion. In the earlier days of the settlement, it is a task to chase the ravenous beasts from the neighbourhood. A price is offered for their heads, and for a time a mutual destruction against the flocks on one side, and the beasts on the other, is the consequence. In a year or two, this task is reduced to an occasional duty. In a few more, it is sought as an amusement: and ere the twenty years expire, the appearance of a wolf among the American farms is far less common than on the most ancient plains of certain parts of France. Every man has his rifle or his musket; and every man not only knows how, but he is fond of using them against such foes. Thus, you see, though wild beasts may be permitted, like Raphael's Seraphim, to encircle your pictures of American manners in faint relief, they must rarely indeed be permitted to enter into the action of the piece; more especially if the scene be laid in any of the settled portions of the three States that form the subject of this letter.

We made part of this excursion in the public stages, part with hired horses, and part in steamboats. It is impossible to enter on a description of the surface of the country we saw, for it included mountains, valleys, and vast plains, intermingled in such a manner as to render the task wearisome. We had gone about fifty miles west of Albany, when my companion desired the vehicle to stop, and invited me to mount a gentle ascent on foot. On reaching the summit, he turned and pointed to a view which resembled none I had ever before witnessed.

We were travelling along the termination of a range of mountains, which, running north and south, fell gracefully away, in the former direction, into

what is called the valley of the Mohawk, before they gradually rose again on the other side of that river The descent and the ascent were very similar, the intervening country lying in broken and irregular terraces, which often had the appearance of fertile valleys, before the rich bottoms of the river are gained. Our precise position was on the very brow of one of the most projecting spurs of this broken range, and it admitted of an uninterrupted prospect to the north-east, and to the north-west, of the falling country in our front, and of the rising hills opposite, that could not have been contained in a circumference of much less than two hundred miles. The view was limited to what lay in advance of a line drawn nearly east and west, the adjacent mountains presenting obstacles to our vision, further south. It was completely an American scene, embracing all that admixture of civilization, and of the forest, of the works of man, and of the reign of nature, that one can so easily imagine to belong to this country.

There was perhaps an equal distribution of field and forest. The latter term is not, however, the best, since it was a constant succession of open land and of wood, in proportions which, without being exactly, were surprisingly equal. You have stood upon a height, and looked down upon a fertile French plain, over which agriculture has been conducted on a scale a little larger than common. You may remember the divisions formed by the hues of the grains of the vineyards, and of the grasses, which give to the whole an air so chequered and remarkable. Now, by extending the view to the size I have named, and enlarging these chequered spots to a corresponding scale, you get a tolerably accurate idea of what I would describe. The dark green shadows are produced by the foliage of a wood, reserved, perhaps, for the use of half a dozen farms, and lying in a body, some common objection to culture influencing that

number of proprietors to select adjacent ground for their reservations,) and the fields of golden yellow, or of various shades and hues, are produced by the open fields. The distance diminishes the objects to the eye, and brings the several parts so much in union, as to lend to the whole the variegated aspect of the sort of plain just mentioned. The natural river which divides this glorious panorama in nearly two equal parts, with its artificial rival,* and the sweet meadows that border its banks, were concealed beneath the brow of the last precipitous descent. But countless farm-houses, with their capacious outbuildings, dotted the fields, like indicated spots on a crowded map. From those in the near view, rose the light vapoury summer smoke. The fields were alive with herds, and with numberless and nearly imperceptible white atoms, which, but for their motion, it would not have been easy to imagine flocks. In the distance, though these more minute objects were lost, habitations, barns, and pyramids of hay and of grain, could be distinguished, until the power of vision failed. Immediately at our feet, at the distance of a few miles, lay a wide, rich terrace, intersected with roads, that were bordered, as usual, by scattered farm buildings, surrounded by their granaries and barns. Near its centre, a cluster of buildings assumed the air of a hamlet. From among these roofs, rose the spire of a country church. I was told that a multitude of villages lay within the limits of the view; but as they were generally placed near some stream, for the advantage of its water-power, the uneven formation of the land hid them from our sight. The eye overlooked even the cities of Albany and Troy, and rested, in that direction, on some of the lesser spurs of the mountains of Vermont.

* The great canal, 360 miles in length.

As I looked upon this scene, I felt it only wanted the recollections and monuments of antiquity to give it the deepest interest. The opinion might have escaped my lips, amid the expressions of a sincere delight. My companion gently touched an arm, and directed my attention from the view to himself. He was standing at my elbow with an open map of the country in his hand. As he met my eye, he gravely said, "You complain of the absence of association to give its secret, and perhaps greatest charm which such a sight is capable of inspiring. You complain unjustly. The moral feeling with which a man of sentiment and knowledge looks upon the plains of your hemisphere, is connected with his recollections; here it should be mingled with his hopes. The same effort of the mind is as equal to the one as to the other. Examine this map. You see our position, and you know the space that lies between us and the sea. Now look westward, and observe how many degrees of longitude, what broad reaches of territory must be passed before you gain the limits of our establishments, and the consequent reign of abundance and civilization." Here he dropped the map; and I fancied he even spoke with solemnity, as he continued—"Count ———," he said, "you see that I am a man of middle age: listen to what even my short memory extends. Along the river which lies hid in the deep valley before us, the labours of man have existed for more than a century. There are one or two shallow streams near us, along which the enterprise of the settlers early directed itself. A few miles to the west, we shall enter a little valley, where a handfull of refugees from Ireland took up their abodes some eighty years ago; and there are other insulated spots, where solitary individuals trusted to the savage, and raised their simple dwellings before the war of the revolution. But that little plain, at our feet, could have fed, and clothed, and

harboured all who were then scattered, not only over the parts of the country I have shown you here, but," sweeping his hand along the map, across states and territories larger than those governed by most of the European monarchs, "all of white colour, who then inhabited these wide regions too. I remember this country, Sir, as it existed in my childhood; and it is vain to say, it is a land without recollections Draw a line from this spot, north and south, and all of civilization that you shall see for a thousand miles west, is what man has done since my infancy. You exclude, by this boundary, far more than you gain in the meagre exceptions. That view before you is but a fac-simile of a thousand others. I know not what honest pleasure is to be found in recollection, that cannot be excited by a knowledge of these facts. These are retrospects of the past, which, brief and familiar as they are, lead the mind insensibly to cheerful anticipations, which may penetrate into a futurity as dim and as fanciful as any fictions the warmest imaginations can conceive of the past. But the speculator on moral things can enjoy a satisfaction here, that he who wanders over the plains of Greece will seek in vain. The pleasure of the latter, if he be wise and good, is unavoidably tinged with melancholy regrets; while here all that reason allows may be hoped for in behalf of man. Every one in mediocrity of circumstances has enjoyed some of that interest which is attendant on the advancement of those objects on which he has fastened a portion of his affections. It may be the moral or physical improvement of his child,—the embellishment of a garden, a paddock, a park, or of the conveniences of some town; but, depend on it, there is no pleasure connected with any interest of this character, that is commensurate with that we enjoy, who have seen the birth, infancy, and youth, and who are now about to become spectators of the maturity of a

whole country. We live in the excitement of a rapid and constantly progressive condition. The impetus of society is imparted to all its members, and we advance because we are not accustomed to stand still. Even the sagacious and enterprising New-Englandman, gets an additional impulse in such a living current; the descendant of the Hollander is fast losing his phlegm; and men of all nations, hereditary habits and opinions, receive an onward impulse by the constant influence of such a communion. I have stood upon this identical hill, and seen nine tenths of its smiling prospect darkened by the shadows of the forest. You observe what it is to-day. He who comes a century hence, may hear the din of a city rising from that very plain, or find his faculties confused by the number and complexity of its works of art."

Cadwallader ceased, and we re-entered the carriage in silence. He had spoken with his customary warmth and decision, but I felt that he had spoken the truth. I began to look around me with new eyes, and instead of seeking subjects of exulting comparison between what I saw here and what I had left behind me, I found new subjects of admiration and of wonder at every turn. You may be assured I was not so ignorant as to forget that the first step in all improvements is more imposing than the subsequent; that to clear a country of its wood is in itself a greater visible change, than to supply the place of the latter with the more finished accompaniments of civilization; but the progress of which I was a witness, bounded itself by no such vulgar deception.

Shortly after this detention, we entered the village of Cherry-Valley, which was the spot named by my friend as the place originally occupied by the Irish emigrants. It is a village of perhaps a hundred dwellings, seated on a little plain, and is remarkable for nothing, amid its numberless, neat, spacious, and convenient sisters. This place, now rather east of the

centre of the State, was, during the war of the revolution, the frontier settlement in this part of the United States. At present, two thirds of the State of New-York, and the whole of the large States of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, lie nearly in a line due west. It was ravaged and burnt by an incursion of the British and Indians from Canada, during the war, and many a dreary tale is told of the bloody incidents of that day. I was shown a dwelling (a modern one) on whose site a whole family had been cut off, with the exception of a lad, then a boy at some distant school. This boy, nearly if not the sole survivor of his race, afterwards became one of the most distinguished advocates of America. He is recently dead, and is spoken of universally in terms of admiration and esteem.*

Our route now lay, for many miles, amid mountains. The scenery was always striking—sometimes wild and peculiar, at others as soft and lovely as valleys, streams, and quiet, could make it. We passed the night at Cooperstown, the shire or county town of Otsego. As we were now completely off all the great routes west, and in a part of the country that had been settled about forty years, I profited by the opportunity to make a few statistical inquiries, that may serve to give a tolerably accurate general idea of this portion of the country.

The county of Otsego covers, as near as I could ascertain, less than a thousand square miles. Its population in 1826 was 47,000 souls. By allowing for the increase of numbers since, the proportion will give rather more than fifty inhabitants to the square mile. Cooperstown is the largest place in the county, containing less than fifteen hundred inhabitants. and consequently this is the rate of the agricultural and manufacturing population of an entirely inland, and

* The late John Wells, of New-York.

rather secluded, portion of the State. The village is neat, better built even than is common in America, which is vastly better (for villages) than any thing of the sort in Europe. It lies on one of the smallest of those lakes with which New-York abounds.

There resided formerly near this village a gentleman who is the reputed author* of a series of tales, which were intended to elucidate the history, manners, usages, and scenery, of his native country. As curiosity on American subjects has led to their republication in Europe, you may possibly have seen the books. One of them (the "Pioneers") is said to contain some pretty faithful sketches of certain habits, and even of some individuals who were known among the earlier settlers of this very spot. I cannot pledge myself for the accuracy of this opinion, nor could any one be found here who appeared to possess sufficient information on the subject to confirm it. But, so far as natural objects are concerned, the descriptions are sufficiently exact, and will fortunately save me the trouble of repetition. My present object, however, in referring to the book, is to lead you to a peculiarity that, I think, distinguishes not only this precise spot, but most others, within the limits of what is called the "new countries."† You will find the stumps, wild-looking and dead trees, with other evidences of a recent origin, frequently alluded to in the descriptions of the Pioneers. There is certainly some difference in the duration of these relics of the forest, according to the durable qualities of the original growth of timber. Still, more or less of these rude

* The Americans, like the English, rarely put their names to any light works.

† The Americans call all that portion of their territory which has been settled since the revolution "new." If the State has been created since that period, it is a "new State;" but Otsego, and indeed all of New-York, is already getting, by comparison, to be "old."

and ungainly accompaniments are still to be found in two thirds of the landscapes of these regions. The stumps of the deciduous trees disappear in a few seasons; but where there have been many of a perennial growth, a century will scarcely serve to destroy them.

You will recollect, that those descriptions of girdled trees, of which we read in Europe, as forming a part of American scenery, are rather exceptions, than characteristic. It is a manner of *improving* certainly much practised at the south, and sometimes in the more northern States; but it is far from being either the best, or the ordinary mode of clearing land, in any great section of the country. The tree is commonly felled by cutting it at such a distance from the earth, as may be most convenient to the stature of the chopper. The trunk is then divided into suitable lengths, and the branches are severed, and collected. With the exceptions of such trees as are selected for lumber, the whole are piled in heaps of sufficient size to insure their consumption by fire. The latter process is called logging. The brand is next applied, and the whole field is subjected to a temporary, but fierce action of the element. Nothing can be more dreary and savage in aspect, than an extensive plain, or a valley, which has thus been completely blackened by fire. They are frequent in the newer districts, but comparatively rare in those often or fifteen years' establishment.

The admixture of civilization with these wild looking memorials of a state of nature, is, indeed, the chief distinctive feature between a landscape in the newer districts of America, and one in our own Europe. There are certainly other points of difference, but I should describe this as the principal and most striking. One can soon become accustomed to the universal use of fences; to even what appears to be

a prodigal waste of wood in their construction;* nd to that air of newness and freshness which is so very striking, in the villages, farm-houses, out-buildings, and, indeed, every thing artificial one sees. But time and reflection are necessary to understand the situation of a country, in which academies, churches, towns, and, in short, most things which an advanced state of civilization can produce, are blended with objects that commonly mark an infant state of society. There is no difficulty in comprehending the growth of Petersburg, or of Odessa, for one sees the hand of the autocrat in their works; but in America, all beyond that which nature has done, is the spontaneous work of the population. There are certainly vast tracts of country where these coarser evidences of infancy have already disappeared; but they are still to be found in many others, even in the comparatively old establishments of the western parts of New-York and Pennsylvania.

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* The American fences vary according to the quarter of the country in which they are situated. They are often well built, and even handsome, low walls of stone. The writer saw not only farms, but large districts, subdivided into fields of from five to fifty acres in this manner. Next to these, are fences, of which the basements are made of stone, and the summits of rails. Posts and rails come next, and are found every where in the second stage of improvement. A fence that is called a "worm fence," from its being composed of rails with the ends alternately laid on each other, in the form of a screen, is much in use, especially where the abundance of timber renders labour a greater object than wood. The first, and certainly the most natural, if not the most durable, division of the land, is by what is called the "log-fence." This is formed by laying the trunks of trees in a line, with their ends doubling for a couple of feet. Notches are cut in the ends of these logs, and billets of wood are laid in them to connect the ends. The upper sides of the billets are also notched, and they serve for the foundations of new tiers. Three logs piled in this manner make an efficient fence. The duration is, of course, according to the quality of the tree. Perhaps ten years may be fixed for the average. Hedges are very rare. Fences are sometimes made of stumps, extracted by the roots from the earth.

TO SIR EDWARD WALLER, BART.

&c. &c.

New-York,———

The day after we had quitted Cooperstown, we saw a collection of people assembled in front of an inn, which was the principal edifice in a hamlet of perhaps a dozen houses. Cadwallader told me this was the first day of the State election, and that this spot was one of the polls, a name which answers in some degree to the English term, "hustings." Fortunately, the stage changed horses at the inn, and I had an opportunity of examining the incipient step in that process which literally dictates all the national policy of this great republic.

Although each State controls its own forms, not only in the elections, but in every thing else, a description of the usages of one poll will be sufficiently near the truth to give a correct general idea of them all. I now speak literally only of the State of New-York, though, generally, of the whole Union. The elections occur once a year.* They last three days. In the large towns, they are stationary, there being no inconvenience in such an arrangement where the population is dense, and the distances short. But in the country they are held on each successive day at a different place, in order to accommodate the voters. The State is divided into counties, which cover, on an average, 900 square miles each. Some are, how

* There is one State where they occur twice—the little State of Rhode Island, which is still governed by the form of its ancient charter, as granted by Charles II. in 1663. As this is practically the most democratic State in the Union, it affords pretty good evidence that the experiment of a democratic government is not so new in America as some pretend.

ever, larger, and some smaller. These counties are again subdivided into townships, covering, perhaps, eighty or ninety square miles. There is, also, great inequality in the size of these minor districts. These are the two great divisions of territory for all the ordinary purposes of government and police. The counties have courts of their own, and a certain sort of legislative body, which regulates many of their financial affairs. In order that the whole subject, however, may be rendered as clear as possible, we will begin at the base, and ascend to the superstructure of their government.

The most democratic assemblage known to the laws, in which legal and binding resolutions can be enacted, are the town meetings. Any number of the people may assemble when and where they please, to remonstrate, to petition, or even to plot, if they see fit; but their acts can only be recommendatory. The town meetings are held annually, and every citizen who has attained his majority can vote. A moderator (no bad name for a perfectly popular assembly) is chosen by acclamation to preside. The meeting is commonly held in some school-house, but very often in the open air. In some places, though rarely, there are town-houses. At these meetings, all the town officers are chosen. They consist of a supervisor; three assessors, who apportion all the taxes on the individuals, whether imposed by town, county, state, or United States; collectors, who collect all the taxes, except those laid by the United States government, which in time of peace, are just nothing at all; a town-clerk, who keeps certain registers; constable, poor-officers, overseers of highways, path-masters, and a few others. The names of most of these officers indicate their duties. The overseers of the highway are the men who lay out the ordinary roads of the town, and who say how much tax each individual shall contribute in work or in money; and

the path-masters inspect the labour. Men of property and education frequently seek the latter employment. The voting in this popular assembly may be by ballot, but it is generally done by acclamation. There is a penalty if an individual refuse to serve, though they are sometimes excused by the citizens, if a good reason can be rendered. The courts have also a discretionary power in imposing and in laying fines. I was present during the course of this excursion at one of these town meetings. There might have been two hundred citizens assembled before the door of a large school-house. Much good-humour was blended with a sufficient despatch of business. The Americans mingle with a perfect consciousness of their influence on the government, an admirable respect for the laws and institutions of their country. I heard jokes, and one or two open nominations of men of property and character, to fill the humble offices of constable and pound-keeper; but the most perfect good sense and practical usefulness appeared to distinguish all their decisions. There was a contest for the office of supervisor, and it was decided by a close vote. The two candidates were present, and on seemingly very good terms. They were respectable looking yeomen, and he who lost told his rival that he thought the people had shown their judgment. There was no noise, no drinking, nor any excitement beyond that which one would feel in seeing an ordinary foot-race. One farmer observed, that the crows had got the taste of his corn, and unless something was done, there could be little hope for the year's crop. He therefore would propose that a reward of six cents should be paid for every dozen that should be killed, within their town, for the next six months. The resolution was opposed by a hatter, who insisted that he could take care of his hats, and that the farmers ought to take care of their corn. This logic was unsuccess-

ful; the price was reduced a trifle, and the resolution was passed. It was then just as much a law as that which hangs a man for murder. The sum voted to meet the expense was to be apportioned with the other taxes, among the citizens, by the assessors, collected by the collector, received and paid by another officer, &c. &c. After this important act of legislation, the meeting adjourned.

The next body in the scale of the government is the board of supervisors. It is composed of the supervisors of each town in a county, who have a very similar legislative authority over the more familiar interests of the county, as is possessed by their constituents in the towns themselves. They impose taxes for all objects connected with the expenses of the county. Their authority is, however, a good deal circumscribed; enactments by the State legislature being often necessary to enforce their recommendations. When the question involves an expense heavier than common, and its effects are entirely local, the question is often referred to a final decision of the people in their town meetings. This board audits the accounts, and I believe it appoints a treasurer for the county. So far you see the process of government is exceedingly simple. The whole legislative duty is discharged in three or four days, and yet the decisions have great influence on the comfort and property of the people. The duties of the officers named, continue for one year, but the same incumbents are frequently continued for a whole life, especially the collectors, treasurers, constables, and clerks.

Each town is also subdivided into school districts, and road districts. There are overseers of the schools, who regulate all that belongs to the familiar duties of the common schools of the country, to which any body may go.

Each township is also a petty electoral district of

itself, for all the ordinary purposes of the State and the United States' elections, which are held at the same time and place. The three stations taken for the convenience of the elections, as already mentioned, are selected by the inspectors of the poll, who are five or six of the town officers, named by law, and of course chosen annually by the people in their original capacity Each county chooses its own representatives to the lower branch of the State legislature, the number being according to the amount of the population. The State is again divided into what are called senatorial districts, composed of several contiguous counties, each of which chooses a certain number of representatives, who sit in the upper body of the State legislature. Each State has a right to send to the lower House of Congress a number of representatives, in proportion to its entire population. These representatives must be chosen by the people. but the States themselves may regulate the form Some choose them by a general ticket; that is to say each citizen votes for the whole number; and some choose them by districts, in which case each citizen votes for the member, or members, who represent his particular district. The latter is the course adopted by New-York, and in most of the other large States, in which it is difficult for the characters of so many individuals to be intimately known to every body.

Now, complicated as this system may seem in words, it is perfectly simple in practice. It is astonishing how clearly it is understood by those who exercise it, and how difficult it is to make a foreigner get a correct idea of its details. All the elections, except those which are made at the town meetings, where other duties necessarily assemble the citizens, are held at the same time, and at the same place. Thus an American, in one of the more populous States, can exercise all his constitutional rights at an

expense commonly of a ride of four or five miles at the outside, and of three hours of time.

The election on the present occasion embraced senators, (always for the State,) representatives in the assembly,* governor, lieutenant-governor, &c. The inspectors were assembled in a quiet room of the inn, with the ballot-boxes placed before them, on a table. The voters entered at their leisure, and delivered their different ballots to the officers, who, holding them up as lottery numbers are usually exhibited, called the name of the voter aloud, and then deposited the ballot in its proper box. "I challenge that vote," cried an individual, as the name of one man was thus proclaimed. It appeared that there were doubts of its legality. An inquiry was instituted, an oath proffered, explanations were made, and the challenge was withdrawn. The vote was then received. Any one who votes may challenge. Nothing could be more quiet and orderly than this meeting. A few handbills were posted around the house, proclaiming the names, and extolling the qualities of the different candidates, and I heard one or two men disputing the wisdom of certain public measures, rather in irony than in heat. The election was not, however, esteemed a warm one, and perhaps quite one third of the people did not attend the polls at all. Mr. Clinton, the governor, under whose administration the canal policy, as it is called, has been fostered, had declined a re-election, at the expiration of the official term preceding the one now in existence. His place had been filled by another. In the mean time, his political adversaries, profiting by a momentary possession of a legislative majority, had ventured

* The more popular branch of the State legislature, as it is sometimes called, though both are popular alike. The difference is principally in the term of service, and in some little exercise of power.

to assail him in a manner the people were not disposed to relish. He was removed from a seat at the "canal board," a measure which was undoubtedly intended to separate him, as far as possible, from a policy that was already conferring incalculable advantage on the State. The instant Cadwallader was told of this ill-advised and illiberal measure, he exclaimed, that the political adversaries of this gentleman had reseated him in the chair of the government. When asked for an explanation, my friend answered, that the people, though they sometimes visited political blunders with great severity, rarely tolerated persecution. The event has justified his predictions. Although a popular candidate was selected to oppose him, Mr. Clinton has triumphed in this election by an immense majority, and, in a few days, he will become governor of the State for another term of two years.*

After quitting the poll, we familiarly discussed the merits and demerits of this system of popular elections. In order to extract the opinions of my friend, several of the more obvious and ordinary objections were started, with a freedom that induced him to speak with some seriousness.

"You see a thousand dangers in universal suffrage," he said, "merely because you have been taught to think so, without ever having seen the experiment tried. The Austrian would be very apt to say, under the influence of mere speculation too, that it would be fatal to government to have any representation at all; and a vizier of the Grand Turk might find the mild exercise of the laws, which is certainly practised in Austria Proper, altogether fatal to good order.

* No voter can put in two ballots, since all are compelled to place them in the hands of an inspector. In case two ballots are found rolled together, both are rejected. Thus fraud is impossible.

Now we know, not from the practice of fifty years only, but from the practice of two centuries, that it is very possible to have both order and prosperity under a form of government which admits of the utmost extension of the suffrage. It is a never-failing argument on these subjects, that American order is owing to the morality of a simple condition of life, and that our prosperity is incidental to our particular geographical situation. There are many good men, and, in other respects, wise men, even among ourselves, who retain so much of the political theory which pervades the literature of our language, as to believe the same thing. For myself, I cannot see the truth of either of these positions. Our prosperity is owing to our intelligence, and our intelligence to our institutions. Every discreet man in America is deeply impressed with the importance of diffusing instruction among our people, just as many very well-meaning persons in your hemisphere honestly enough entertain a singular horror of the danger of school-books. Thus it is, our natural means of safety to do the very thing which must, of necessity, have the greatest possible influence on the happiness, civilization, and power, of a nation.

"There can be no doubt that, under a bald theory, a representation would be all the better if the most ignorant, profligate, and vagabond part of the community, were excluded from the right of voting. It is just as true, that if all the rogues and corrupt politicians, even including those who read Latin, and have well-lined pockets, could be refused the right of voting, honest men would fare all the better. But as it is very well known that the latter are not, nor cannot well be excluded from the right of suffrage any where, except in a despotism, we have come to the conclusion, that it is scarcely worth while to do so much violence to natural justice, without sufficient reason, as to disfranchise a man merely because he

is poor. Though a trifling *qualification* of property may sometimes be useful, in particular conditions of society, there can be no greater fallacy than its *representation*. The most vehement declaimers in favour of the justice of the representation of property, overlook two or three very important points of the argument. A man may be a voluntary associate in a joint-stock company, and justly have a right to a participation in its management, in proportion to his pecuniary interest; but life is not a chartered institution. Men are born with all their wants and passions, their means of enjoyment, and their sources of misery, without any agency of their own, and frequently to their great discomfort. Now, though government is, beyond a doubt, a sort of compact, it would seem that those who prescribe its conditions are under a natural obligation to consult the rights of the whole. If men, when a little better than common, were any thing like perfect, we might hope to see power lodged with safety in the hands of a reasonable portion of the enlightened, without any danger of its abuse. But the experience of the world goes to prove, that there is a tendency to monopoly, wherever power is reposed in the hands of a minority. Nothing is more likely to be true, than that twenty wise men will unite in opinion in opposition to a hundred fools; but nothing is more certain than that, if placed in situations to control all the interests of their less gifted neighbours, the chance is, that fifteen or sixteen of them would pervert their philosophy to selfishness. This was at least our political creed, and we therefore admitted a vast majority of the community to a right of voting. Since the hour of the revolution, the habits, opinions, laws, and I may say principles of the Americans, are getting daily to be more democratic. We are perfectly aware, that while the votes of a few thousand scattered individuals can make no great or lasting impression on the

prosperity or policy of the country, their disaffection at being excluded might give a great deal of trouble. I do not mean to say that the suffrage may not, in most countries, be extended too far. I only wish to show you that it is not here.

"The theory of representation of property says, that the man who has little shall not dispose of the money of him who has more.* Now, what say experience and common sense? It is the man who has *much* that is prodigal of the public purse. A sum that is trifling in his account, may constitute the substance of one who is poorer. Beyond all doubt, the government of the world, which is most reckless of the public money, is that in which power is the exclusive property of the very rich; and, beyond all doubt, the government of the world which, compared with its means, is infinitely the most sparing of its resources, is that in which they who enact the laws are compelled to consult the wishes of those who have the least to bestow. It is idle to say that an enlarged and liberal policy governs the measures of the one, and that the other is renowned for a narrowness which has lessened its influence and circumscribed its prosperity. I know not, nor care not, what men, who are dazzled with the glitter of things, may choose to say, but I am thoroughly convinced, from observation, that if the advice of those who were influenced by what is called a liberal policy, had been followed in our country, we should have been a poorer and, consequently, a less important and less happy people than at present. The relations between political liberality, and what is called political prodigality, are wonderfully intimate.

"We find that our government is cheaper, and

* When the numbers of those who have nothing, get to be so great as to make their voices of importance, it is time to think of some serious change.

even stronger, for being popular. There is no doubt that the jealousy of those who have little, often induces a false economy, and that money might frequently be saved by bidding higher for talent. We lay no claims to perfection, but we do say, that more good is attained in this manner than in any other which is practised elsewhere. We look at the aggregate of advantage, and neither our calculations nor our hopes have, as yet, been greatly deceived.

"As to the forms of our elections, you see that they are beyond example simple and orderly. After an experience of near forty years, I can say that I have never seen a blow struck, nor any other violent proceeding, at a poll. These things certainly do happen, but, in comparison with the opportunities, at remarkably long intervals. So far from the frequency of elections tending to disturb society, they produce an exactly different effect. A contest which is so soon to be repeated loses half its interest by familiarity. Vast numbers of electors are content to be lookers-on, rarely approaching a poll, except to vote on some question of peculiar concern. The struggle is generally whether A or B shall enjoy the temporary honour or the trifling emolument in dispute, the community seldom being much the better or the worse for the choice. People talk of the fluctuations which are necessarily the consequences of a popular government. They do not understand what they say, Every other enlightened nation of the earth is at this moment divided between great opposing principles; whereas here, if we except the trifling collisions of pecuniary interests, every body is of the same mind, except as to the ordinarily immaterial question of a choice between men. We have settled all the formidable points of policy, by conceding every thing that any reasonable man can ask. The only danger which exists to the duration of our confederacy (and that is not a question of a form of government, but one of

mere policy), proceeds from the little that is aristocratical in our Union. The concentrated power of a State may become, like the overgrown power of an individual, dangerous to our harmony; though we think, and with very good reason, that, on the whole, even this peculiarity adds to the durability of the Union.

"It is unnecessary to say, that so far as mere convenience goes, this method of election can be practised by a hundred millions of people, as easily as by twelve. As to corruption, comparatively speaking, it cannot exist. No man can buy a state, a county, or even a town. In a hotly contested election, it is certainly sometimes practicable to influence votes enough to turn the scale; but, unless the question involve the peculiar interests of the less fortunate class of society, it is clear both parties can bribe alike, and then the evil corrects itself. If the question be one likely to unite the interests and the prejudices of the humbler classes, nine times in ten it is both more humane and wiser that they should prevail. That sort of splendid and treacherous policy, which gives a fallacious lustre to a nation by oppressing those who have the most need of support, is manifestly as unwise as it is unjust. It violates the very principles of the compact, since governments are not formed to achieve, but to protect. After a sufficient force has been obtained to effect the first great objects of the association, the governed, and not the governors, are the true agents in every act of national prosperity, Look at America. What people, or what monarch, if you will, has done half so much as we have done, (compared to our means,) in the last half century, and precisely for the reason that the government is obliged to content itself with protection, or, at the most, with that assistance which, in the nature of things, strictly requires a concentrated action.

"It is of far less importance, according to our no-

tions, what the executive of a nation is called, than that all classes should have a direct influence on its policy. We have no king, it is true, for the word carries with it, to our ears, an idea of expenditure; but we have a head, who, for the time being, has a very reasonable portion of power. We are not jealous of him, for we have taken good care he shall do no harm.

"Though we are glad to find that principles which we have practised, and under which we have prospered so long, are coming more in fashion in Europe, I think you must do us the justice to say, that we are not a nation much addicted to the desire of proselyting. For ourselves we have no fears, and as for other people, if they make some faint imitations of our system, and then felicitate themselves on their progress, we are well content they should have all the merit of inventors. That is a miserable rivalry, which would make a monopoly of happiness. I think, as a people, we rather admire you most when we see you advancing with moderation to your object, than when we hear of the adoption of sudden and violent means. We have ever been reformers rather than revolutionists. Our own struggle for independence was not in its aspect a revolution. We contrived to give it all the dignity of a war, from the first blow. Although our generals and soldiers might not have been so well trained as those they fought against, they were far more humane, considerate, and, in the end, successful, than their adversaries. Our own progress has been gradual. It is not long since a trifling restriction existed on the suffrage of this very State. Experience proved that it excluded quite as many discreet men as its removal would admit of vagabonds. Now it is the distinguishing feature of our policy, that we consider man a reasonable being, and that we rather court, than avoid, the struggle between ignorance and intelligence. We find that this

policy rarely fails to assure the victory of the latter, while it keeps down its baneful monopolies. We extended the suffrage to include every body, and while complaint is removed, we find no difference in the representation. As yet, it is rather an improvement. Should it become an evil, however, we shall find easy and moderate means to change it, since we are certain that a majority will be sufficiently sagacious to know their own interests. You have only to convince us that it is the best government, and we will become an absolute monarchy to-morrow. It is wonderful how prone we are to adopt that which expectation induces us to think will be expedient, and to reject that which experience teaches us is bad. It must be confessed that, so far, all our experiments have been in favour of democracy. I very well know that you in Europe prophesy that our career will end in monarchy. To be candid, your prophecies excite but little feeling here, since we have taken up the opinion you don't very well understand the subject. But should it prove true, *a la bonne heure;* when we find that form of government best, depend on it, we shall not hesitate to adopt it. You are at perfect liberty, if you will, to establish a journal in favour of despotism under the windows of the Capitol. I will not promise you much patronage at first, neither do I think you will be troubled with much serious opposition. At all events, there is nothing in the law to molest the speculation. Now look behind you at the "poll" we have just left; reflect on this fact, and then draw your conclusions, of our own opinion, of the stability of our institutions. We may deceive ourselves, but you of Europe must exhibit a far more accurate knowledge of the state of our country, before we shall rely on your crude prognostics rather than on our own experience."

I could scarcely assure myself that Cadwallader was not laughing at me during a good deal of the time

he was speaking, but after all, it must be confessed there is some common sense in what he said. There were three or four other passengers in the stage, men of decent and sober exterior, among whom I detected certain interchanges of queer glances, though none of them appeared to think the subject of any very engrossing interest. Provoked at their unreasonable indifference to a theme so delightful as liberty, I asked one of them "If he did not apprehend there would be an end to the republic, should General Jackson become the next President?" "I rather think not," was his deliberate, and somewhat laconic answer. "Why not? he is a soldier, and a man of ambition." My unmoved yeoman did not care to dispute either of these qualities, but he still persevered in thinking there was not much danger, since "he did not know any one in his neighbourhood who was much disposed to help a man in such an undertaking."

It is provoking to find a whole nation dwelling in this species of alarming security, for no other reason than that their vulgar and every-day practices teach them to rely on themselves, instead of trusting to the rational inferences of philanthropic theorists, who have so long been racking their ingenuity to demonstrate that a condition of society which has delusively endured for nearly two hundred years, has been in existence all that time in direct opposition to the legitimate deductions of the science of government.

TO SIR EDWARD WALLER, BART.

&c. &c.

Philadelphia, ———.

Since my last letter, I have visited New-Jersey, the eastern parts of Pennsylvania, and Delaware. With the exception of Maine, Illinois, and Indiana, (quite new States,) I have now seen something of all those communities, which, in common parlance, are called the "free States," in contradistinction to those which still encourage the existence of domestic slavery. As respects this material point of policy, the confederation is nearly equally divided in the number of States, thirteen having virtually gotten rid of slavery, and eleven still adhering to the system. The difference between the white population, however, is vastly more in favour of the "free States." We shall not be far out of the way, in stating the whole of the white population of the United States at a little more than ten millions. Of this number, near, if not quite, seven millions are contained in the thirteen northern, middle, and north-western States.

This portion of the Union is governed by the same policy, and its inhabitants seek their prosperity in the same sources of wealth and in the same spirit of improvement. More than half of them are either natives of New-England, or are descended from those who were born in that district of the country. Together, the States I have named cover a surface of little less than 300,000 square miles. If the territory of Michigan be included, (which is not yet sufficiently populous to be a State,) the amount will be swelled to near 330,000. The former will give rather more than twenty-three to the square mile, as the rate of the whole population on the whole surface. But in

making the estimate, what I have already said of the vast regions that are not peopled at all, must be kept in view. Perhaps one third of the territory should be excluded from the calculation altogether. This would leave something more than thirty to the square mile, for the average. But even this estimate is necessarily delusive, as it is known that in the old States there are sixty and seventy souls to the square mile, and in some parts of them many more.

In the course of reflection on this subject, I have been led to inquire when these republics are to reach that ratio of population which, of necessity, is to compel them to adapt their institutions to the usages of European policy. The result is not quite so conclusive as one might at first be disposed to believe. I find that despotism flourishes with little or no opposition in Russia, a country of about twenty-five to the square mile; in Turkey, one of about fifty;* in Spain, one of, say sixty; in Denmark, one of about eighty, &c. &c.; and that liberty is beginning to thrive, or has long thriven, in England, one of more than two hundred, in the Netherlands, one of an equal rate; and, in short, in France, in several of the most populous states of Germany, some of which mount as high as six and nine hundred to the square mile, more particularly the *free* towns!

Here is pretty clear evidence, by that unanswerable argument—fact, that the populousness of a country is not necessarily to control the freedom or despotism of its institutions. But the United States have carried the freedom of their institutions too far, since they go much farther than we have ever found it wise or safe to go in Europe. England herself has stopped short of such excessive freedom. The latter position is certainly much nearer to the truth than the other, and yet if we should assemble even the

* Both in Europe.

travelled brethren of our own club, and put the question to them—"How far do you think that liberty and equality of political rights can be carried in a government, without danger to its foundations?"—it would be seen that the replies would smack a little of the early impressions of the different worthies who compose the fraternity. Let us fancy ourselves for a moment in solemn conclave on this knotty point, and we will endeavour to anticipate the different answers. We will begin with the Prince André Kutmynoseandeyesoff.

"I am of opinion," says our accomplished, intelligent, and loyal prince, "that without a vast standing army, a nation can neither secure its frontiers, nor on occasion bring them properly within a ring fence. In what manner is a serf to be made to respect his lord, unless he see that the latter can enforce his rights by having recourse to the bayonet, or in what manner is even rank among ourselves to be regulated, without a common centre whence it must flow? It would be utterly impossible to keep an empire composed of subjects born in the arctic circle and subjects born on the Caspian, men speaking different languages, and worshipping Jesus and Mahomet, together, without such a concentration of power as shall place each in salutary fear of the ruler. It is quite clear that a nation without a vast standing army——"

"I beg pardon for the interruption, mon Prince," cries Professor Jansen: "I agree with you *in toto*, except as to the army. Certainly no spectacle is more beautiful than that of a kind and benevolent monarch, dwelling in the midst of his people like a father in the bosom of a vast family, and at once the source of order and the fountain of honour. Still I can see no great use in an overgrown army, which infallibly leads to a waste of money and a mispending of time. Soldiers are unquestionably necessary

to prevent invasion or aggression, and to be in readiness to look down any sudden attempts at revolution; but they are dangerous and extravagant playthings. When a sovereign begins to stir his battalions as he does his chess-men, one can never calculate what move he means to make next; and as to rank, what can be more venerable or more noble than the class of Counts, for instance—["Hear, hear," from Sir Edward Waller]—a set of nobles who hold so happy and so respected an intermediate station between the prince and his people? That is clearly the happiest government in the whole world, where the labour of ruling is devolved on one man: but I shall always protest against the wisdom of a large standing army."

"*Quant à moi*," observes the colonel, making an apologetic bow, "I cannot agree with either the one or the other. An army before all things, but no despot; and, least of all, a despot who does nothing but stay at home and vegetate on his throne. If I must have an absolute monarch, King Stork any day to King Log. In my youth, I will confess, certain visions of glory floated before my eyes, and conquest appeared the best good of life; but time and hard service have weakened these impressions, and I can now plainly perceive all the advantages of *La Charte*. In a constitutional monarchy, one can enjoy the advantages of a despotism without any of its disadvantages. You have an army to vindicate the national honour, as ready, as brave, and as efficient, as though the power of its head were unlimited; and yet you have not the constant danger of *lettres de cachet*, bastiles, and monks. By a judicious division of estates, those odious monopolies, which have so fatal a tendency to aristocracy——"

"If you stop there, dear Jules," interrupts a certain Sir Edward Waller, "we shall be in the majority, and the question is our own. Nothing can be more dangerous than a despotism, every one must

allow" (though two worthy members had just held the contrary doctrine.) "But you are touching on the very thing now, that must unavoidably prove fatal to your monarchy, *la charte*, and all, since it is clear, that a monarch needs the support of an aristocracy, and an aristocracy is nothing without money.—An enlightened, unpaid, disinterested gentry, who possess all the property——"

'Money!' echoes the colonel, in heat; "it is that money which is the curse of you English. You have it all, and yet you see you are hourly in terror of bankruptcy. Thank God, if the Revolution has done nothing else, it has cut up root and branch all our odious seignories, with their feudal follies; and man now begins to think himself the owner of the soil, and not a plant."

"Nay, my dear Béthizy, keep your temper; you are not now storming the bridge of Lodi. Reflect one moment; what will become of France when her whole territory shall be subdivided in freeholds not bigger than a pocket-handkerchief?"

"And your island! what will the poor devils of paupers do when Lord ——— shall own the whole island?"

"I think," observes the abbate, perceiving that the argument is likely to wax hot, "that it is a question that will admit of much to be said on both sides, whether a people will leave more lasting and brilliant recollections, if their career has been run under a republican or a monarchical form of government. In Italy, we find arguments to maintain both positions; though at present we are somewhat divided between a hierarchy and such minute geographical divisions as shall insure a close inspection into the interests of all who have any right at all to be consulted in these matters. I can neither agree with the prince, nor with the professor, nor with the Count, nor yet with Sir Edward, though I think all of us must be of

opinion that a popular government is a thing quite impracticable."

"Oh! all, all, all, all."

"It is quite certain that your Lazzaroni would scarcely know what to do with political power if they had it," continues the abbate.

"Nor a serf," says the Prince.

"I can see no use in giving it even to a Count," mutters the Dane.

"Nor to a Manchester reformer," puts in Sir Edward.

"It is quite certain the *canaille* do not know how to use it," adds Jules Béthizy, with a melancholy sigh; and so the question is disposed of.

Now, if my friend Cadwallader were a member of the club (and I hope to live long enough to see the day when he shall become one,) he might give a very different opinion from them all. Let us imagine, for an instant, what would be the nature of his argument. He would probably say, that, "my countrymen have taken care there shall be neither Lazzaroni, nor serf, (he might gag a little at the thought of the blacks,)* nor Counts, nor Manchester reformers; and any opinions which may be formed on premises of this nature are, in consequence, utterly inapplicable to us. I dare say the abbate will very willingly admit, that if there were nothing but cardinals in Italy, a popular government would do very well; and perhaps Sir Edward will allow if the English population were all baronets of seven thousand a year, the elective franchise might be extended even in his kingdom without any very imminent danger. It is wonderful how very difficult it is to make men comprehend that a thing

* It is manifestly unsafe to found any arguments concerning the political institutions of this country on the existence of slavery, since the slaves have no more to do with government than inanimate objects.

can be done by any one else, which they have long been used to consider as exceeding their own ability to perform. This feeling of selfishness, or of vanity, whichever you please, insinuates itself into all our actions, and finally warps our opinions, and obscures our judgments.

"I do not believe it is in the power of man to make a Turk comprehend the nature of English liberty; simply because, when he looks around him and sees the state of society in which he himself vegetates, he can neither understand the energy of character which requires such latitude for its exertion, nor the state of things which can possibly render it safe. It appears to me, that it is very nearly as difficult to make an Englishman comprehend that it is very possible for a people to prosper under a degree of liberty still greater than that he enjoys. His self-love, his prejudices, and his habits are all opposed to the admission. Experience and fact go for nothing. He is determined there shall be some drawback to all the seeming prosperity of a state of things which exceeds his own notions of the sources whence prosperity ought to flow; and though he may not be sufficiently conversant with the details to lay his finger on the sore spot, he is quite confident there must be one. He swears it is festering, and that by-and-bye we shall hear something of it worth knowing. I remember once to have conversed with a renowned English statesman on this very subject. He was sufficiently complimentary on the institutions of my country, and on the character of my countrymen, but we were neither of us the dupes of such simple courtesy. I believe he did me the justice to see that I understood him, for he very soon took occasion to remark that he should like the government of the United States better if it were a '*Frank Republic.*' Perceiving that I looked surprised, and possibly understanding the expression of my countenance to say

how much I wondered that a man of his experience should expect great *frankness* in any government, he went on to explain; 'I mean,' he continued, 'that I should like your government better, if there were no pageant of a head, and if Congress would act for itself directly, without the intervention of a President.'

This conversation occurred shortly after the Senate of the United States had rejected a treaty with Great Britain, which the President had made (through the public minister), and which the King of Great Britain had previously ratified. '*Hinc illæ lachrymæ.*' I confined my answer to a simple observation, that the actual power of the President was very little, but that we should unnecessarily impede the execution of the laws, and embarrass our intercourse with foreign nations, by abolishing the office, which added greatly to the convenience of the country, without in the slightest degree invading or endangering the liberties of the people.

Now, what was the amount of the argument which this gifted man agitated in his own mind, on a subject so important to the policy of a great nation? He could understand that a right might exist somewhere to annul the bargain of a minister, for in his proper person he had just before refused to ratify a treaty made by one of his own agents,* but he could not understand that this power should, or could, with propriety, be lodged in hands where he was not accustomed to see it. Napoleon would have told him that he himself submitted to a thousand vain and restrictive regulations, which only tended to embarrass his operations and to lessen his influence abroad.

Again, it is quite common for the American to gather in discourse with Englishmen, either by inuendoes, or direct assertions, that there is little or no religion in his country! Nine times in ten, the former

* With Mexico.

is content to laugh in his sleeve at what he terms the egregious ignorance of his relative; or perhaps he makes a circle of friends merry by enumerating this instance, among fifty others, of the jaundiced views that the folks on the homestead take of the condition of those who have wandered beyond the paternal estate. But should he be tempted to probe the feeling (I will not call it reason) which induces so many warm-hearted, and kindly intentioned individuals in the mother country, to entertain a notion so unjust, not to say so uncharitable, of their fellow-Christians, under another *régime*, he will find that it is in truth bottomed on no other foundation than the circumstance that we have no established church. And yet it is a known fact that the peculiar faith of England, is in America on the comparative increase, and that in England itself, it is on a comparative decrease, one half of the whole population being at this moment, if I am rightly informed, dissenters from the very church they think so necessary to religion, morals, and order. In America, we think the change in the latter country is owing to the establishment itself; and the change in our own, to the fact that men are always willing to acknowledge the merits of any thing which is not too violently obtruded on their notice. We may be wrong, and so may they; but if the fact were only half as well authenticated as is the one that we are competent to maintain our present political institutions, I should consider it a question not worth the trouble of discussion."

That Cadwallader would use some such manner of reply I know, for the anecdote of his conversation with the English statesman (now unhappily no more) I have actually heard him mention. I confess the justice of many of his remarks, for I am perfectly conscious of having been the subject of a great many of these vague and general conjectures on American policy; but a closer observation of the actual state

of the country is gradually forcing me to different conclusions. The more candid European will admit that a vast number of our usages and institutions owe their existence, at the present hour, to prejudice. Now, is it not possible that prejudice may have quite as active an agency in keeping down aristocracy, as in keeping it up? It is perfectly absurd to say, that it is an ordering of nature; for nature, so far from decreeing that the inequality of her gifts is to be perpetuated in a direct male line, and in conformity to the rights of primogeniture, is commonly content with visiting a single family with her smiles, at long intervals, and with a very unequal bounty. So far as nature is concerned, then, she is diametrically opposed to the perpetuation of power or consideration in the regular descent. Neither talents, nor physical force, nor courage, nor beauty, is often continued long in any one race. But men do get, and do keep too, the control of things in their own families, in most of the countries of the earth. This is a practical argument, which it will be found difficult to controvert. It is precisely for this reason that I begin to think the people of the United States will not soon part with the power of which they are at present in such absolute possession. But knowledge you will say is power, and knowledge is confined to the few. I am inclined to think, after all, that the degree of knowledge which is necessary to make a man obstinate in the defence of rights which he has been educated to believe inherent, is far from being very profound. It is well known that despots have often failed in attempts on the personal privileges of their subjects. Paul could send a prince to Siberia, but he could not make a Boyar shave. Now, the rights of suffrage, of perfect political equality, of freedom in religion, and of all other political privileges, are the beards of these people. It will be excessively hazardous to attempt to shorten them by a hair. The ornaments of the

chin are not more effectually a gift of nature, than are the political privileges of the American his birthright. Great as is the power of the English aristocracy, there are limits to its exercise, as you very well know, and any man can predict a revolution, should they attempt to exceed them. I fancy the only difference between the mother and child in this particular is, that the latter, so far as political rights go, has rather a richer inheritance than the former. Time has clearly little to do with the matter beyond the date of our individual existence, since a human life is quite long enough to get thoroughly obstinate opinions on any subject, even though prejudice should be their basis.

From this familiar and obvious manner of reasoning (and I think it will be found to contain a fair proportion of the truth) it would seem to result that there is quite as little likelihood the American will lose any of his extreme liberty, as that the Dutchman, the Frenchman, or the Englishman, will lose any great portion of that which he now enjoys. The question is then narrowed to the use the former will make of his power.

The past speaks for itself, and in language sufficiently plain for any man to comprehend, who is not obstinately bent on refusing credit to institutions to which he is unaccustomed. The future is necessarily, in some degree, matter of conjecture; but in order to anticipate it with an approach to accuracy, we will continue our investigation of facts.

You are already master of my opinions on the general character of the inhabitants of New-England. If I add the results of the observations made in the recent tour, you will possess the remarks I have made on more than half of the whole population of the country, and this too without excluding the slaves from the calculation.

The great national characteristics throughout this

whole people, are, with few and limited exceptions, every where essentially the same. But shades of difference do assuredly exist, which may serve rather to modify the several states of society, than to effect any material change. I think the principal distinctions emanate from slavery, and from the greater or less support that is given to the common schools. The Americans themselves rightly esteem knowledge as the palladium of their liberty, no less than the mighty agent of their comparative importance; and wherever a sound and wholesome policy prevails, the utmost attention is paid to the means of its diffusion. You should constantly remember, however, that each State has the entire control of all these subjects in its own hands. Consequently, although the mighty truth is universally admitted, very different means have been resorted to, in order to promote its advancement.

The policy of New-York and Ohio differs but little from that of New-England in this particular. Unhappily that of Pennsylvania is less enlightened. In the former State during the current year (1824), when the population is rather under 1,600,000, there are 7,642 common schools; 402,940 scholars have been taught in these schools for an average of nine months. These are in addition to all the *private* schools, which are numerous, especially in the towns; and which include all that push education beyond reading, writing, arithmetic, and a little grammar and geography.*

From these numbers, which are taken from official reports, you gain two important facts; the extent of the common education, and the number of the children compared to that of the adults. During the

* In 1825, there were 7773 common schools, and 425,530 scholars, exclusive of those who attended 656 schools, from which no returns were made in time to be included.

same year (1824) there were 11,553 marriages, 61,383 births, and 22,544 deaths, or nearly three births to one death. It must be remembered that this State contains more populous towns than any other, and that the deaths in the city of New-York alone, from the wandering character of so great a portion of its population, must necessarily exceed the regular proportion of nature.

While on this subject, it may be well to advert to a few other facts, of which I propose to make some use, when further observation shall entitle me to comment on the present condition and future fortunes of the slaves. In 1790, the whole population of the State of New-York was 340,120. Of this number 25,975 were blacks, chiefly slaves. In 1800 there were 536,050 persons, of whom 30,988 were blacks, chiefly slaves. In 1810, 959,049 persons, and 40,350 blacks, of whom, perhaps, nearly half were free. In 1820 the population was 1,372,812, of whom only 39,367 were blacks; viz., 10,088 slaves, and 29,279 free people of colour. In 1825 the population was 1,616,458, of whom 39,999 were blacks, all free, or, what was the same thing, all to be free on the 4th of July, 1827, and by far the most of them were free at the time the census was actually taken.

It will be well to recollect that the State of New-York, so far from being a place avoided by the blacks, is rather one they seek. The scarcity of domestics, and the large proportion of families who keep servants, induce thousands of free people of colour to resort there for employment. A great many are also hired as the labourers on board of vessels. Still they do not increase, amid the vast increase of the whites. A trifling migration to Hayti may have affected the returns a little, but there is no doubt that the migration into the State exceeds that from it. One must remember how few marriages take place among these people; their moral condition,

their vagrant habits, their exposure, their dirt, and all the accumulated misfortunes of their race.*

I think it is quite fair to infer, from these statements, that freedom is not favourable to the continuation of the blacks while society exists under the influence of its present prejudices. The general returns of the number of the free blacks in the whole of the United States, certainly show that they are on the increase; but this fact is to be ascribed to the constant manumissions, and not to any natural cause. In Massachusetts, there have been no slaves since the declaration of independence. It has, of course, been a favourite residence of the blacks, some of whom have risen to respectable situations in life. Among them, there have been traders, ship-masters, and even ship-owners; and yet they have scarcely increased in number, during the last thirty years. In 1790, there were 5,463 blacks in that State; and in 1820, there were 6,740. During the same time the whole population has advanced from 378,787 to 523,287.† A vast emigration to the new States has kept down the population of Massachusetts. Thus, you see, that while the whites have increased in thirty years more than thirty-eight per cent., the blacks have not reached the rate of twenty-four per cent., and this, too, under as favourable circumstances, as they are probably fated to enjoy, for a long time to come, in these republics. But Massachusetts was alone for many years, in the protection and favour she extended

* At the census of 1825, there were in the State of New-York 1,513,421 neat cattle; 349,628 horses; 3,496,539 sheep; 1,467,573 hogs; 2,269 grist-mills, chiefly by water; 5,195 saw-mills, almost all by water; 1,222 fulling-mills; 1,584 carding-mills; 76 cotton, and 189 woollen manufactories of cloth for sale. There were 645 deaf and dumb, 1,421 idiots, and 819 lunatics. It should, however, be remembered, that unfortunate subjects of these maladies, are frequently sent from other States to the benevolent nstitutions of this.

† Census of 1820.

to this unfortunate race. The rate of their increase was vastly greater, before the manumission laws went into force in the adjoining States, than now. Thus, between 1790 and 1800, they increased one hundred and eighty per cent., a rate much greater than that of the whites during the same period (a consequence of the influx of the former, and of the emigration of the latter). Between 1800 and 1810 their increase was forty-four per cent., and between 1810 and 1820 only five per cent.; there being only three more blacks in 1820 than in 1810, while the whites, notwithstanding emigration, had augmented 51,116.

Now it is quite certain that, in a country subject to so many changes as this, and where man is so very active, all statistical calculations are liable to the influences of minute and familiar causes, which are very likely to escape the detection of a stranger. When Cadwallader first directed my attention to the foregoing reports, I was about to jump to the instant conclusion, that the free blacks did not propagate their species at all, and that, as the gross increase of their numbers in the country was owing to manumissions, nothing remained but to give them all their freedom, in order to render the race extinct. But my companion, like most of his countrymen, is a calculator too wary and too ingenious to fall into so gross an error.

There is no doubt that the free blacks, like the aborigines, gradually disappear before the superior moral and physical influence of the whites, but the rate of their decrease is not to be calculated by that in the State of Massachusetts, nor even by that of the native possessors of the soil. A black man, unlike an Indian, can be easily civilized; and perhaps there are no peasants in the world who require a greater indulgence of their personal comforts than the people of colour in the northern and middle States of this

Union. In this respect they are like the menials of most other nations, having acquired from their masters a reflected taste for luxury. But it is well known that cold is not congenial to the physical temperament of a black.* The free blacks are found hovering as near as possible to the slave States, because the climate of the south is what they crave. Thus, in Pennsylvania they increase, while in New-York they decrease. Some portion of this effect is no doubt produced by the more extensive commerce of the latter (which works up a great number of blacks as sailors), and by the peculiar policy of the Quakers, as well as of the descendants of the Germans, in the former State, both of whom display singular care of

* All experience proves, that ages and generations must elapse before the descendants of the African can acquire habits of endurance which shall enable him effectually to resist frost, if, indeed, it can ever be done. Indeed, while the negro is often powerful of frame, and generally supple and active, it may be questioned whether he can endure extreme fatigue of any sort, as well as a white man; at least, as well as the hardy and vigorous whites of this country. A thousand instances might be adduced to prove this position; but two must suffice. A few years since, an American whaler was struck by a whale in the Pacific Ocean, and the vessel instantly bilged. The crew was compelled to traverse half of that vast ocean in their boats, subject to the utmost privation, and sustaining the most horrible sufferings. But few survived to reach the land. The blacks, of whom there were a fair proportion, died, being the first to sink under their abstinence and labour.—A few years since, a small vessel ran into a bay on Long Island, during a severe snow-storm, at a time that Cadwallader was near the spot. She was soon surrounded by a thin ice, and as her crew had no fire, nor boat, they were reduced to the utmost distress. A signal was made to that effect. A young gentleman proceeded to the rescue of the unfortunate mariners, seconded by two servants, one of whom was white, and the other black. The latter was a farm labourer of great strength and activity. The ice was to be broken near a mile, in the face of a cutting wind, and while the thermometer (Fahrenheit) stood several degrees below Zero. The crew were rescued, but the black was near dying, and had to be landed before half the toil was completed, and a white man was taken in his place.

their black dependants. But, on the whole, I think it must be assumed as a fact for our future reasoning, that the free blacks rather decrease than otherwise (always excepting the effects of manumission); and it is well known, that the whole white population grows rather faster than the whole black.

Before closing these remarks I will add, that the whites, with the exception of certain districts in the southern states, attain a greater degree of longevity than the blacks, and that it is known that the slaves have more children than the free people of colour.

It is not improbable that there are some immaterial errors in the reports, from which the number of children in the common schools of New-York have been taken, since the State bestows its bounty in proportion to the wants of the district; but, on the other hand, it must be remembered, that the amounts are gathered by public and qualified officers, and that each school district is obliged to tax itself for just as much money as it receives, in order to raise the sum necessary to defray the current expenses of common education, so that, on the whole, it is probable there is no great exaggeration; nor is a traveller, who has witnessed the immense number of white-headed and chubby little urchins he sees all over the country, at all disposed to suspect it.

We of Europe, when we listen to the wonders of these regions, in the way of increase and prosperity, are a little addicted to suspect the native narrators of the prodigies of a love of the marvellous. I once ventured to ask Cadwallader his opinion on this delicate point. His answer was sufficiently to the point, and you shall have it, without the smallest qualification:—

"That the Europeans," he said, "will not believe facts, which have a daily existence before our eyes, proves nothing but their ignorance. In my own opinion, and this is but a matter of opinion, there is less

falsehood uttered in the United States (if you exclude the slaves) than in any other Christian country, though Heaven knows there is quite enough. In saying falsehood, I mean untruths, whether intentional or not. A certain degree of gross credulity is absolutely necessary, that one very numerous class of vulgar falsehoods should flourish any where. Our European kinsmen, who are quite as enlightened as any other people of your hemisphere, are far from being exempt from the foible of excessive credulity. The tales one hears on the top of a stage-coach would scarcely do in an American vehicle; for the shrewd, practical, quick-witted, and restless people of this country, would be ashamed to believe, and consequently ashamed to tell, half the extraordinary feats of such or such a subject of notoriety, merely because they have been accustomed to think understandingly of what a man can do in almost every situation in which he is ordinarily placed. Nowhere is a lie so soon and so thoroughly sifted as here. Even the institutions of the country are favourable to the discovery of truth, as no man is *ex officio* considered immaculate. Love of country, a stronger passion in America than even in England, or rather a more general one, has never protected an officer in a false colouring of a victory or a defeat, when the truth was within the reach of the multitude. The attempts are comparatively rare, for the hazard is notorious. During the war of the revolution, the public documents of the nation, which were issued in something like the form of bulletins, were found to be so true, that the signature of the Secretary of Congress was universally deemed conclusive as to all interesting facts.

"In no one instance were the people ever intentionally deceived, and it is rare indeed that they were ever deceived at all. History, in 1824, gives in substance the same accounts of our battles, fortunes,

and reverses, as did Charles Thompson in 1776. Indeed, it would be just as impracticable for the government to mislead, for any length of time, as it would for an individual to make people think a man could work a miracle, or get into a quart bottle. Thus we are spared a prodigious amount of falsehood, which prevails elsewhere, merely because no one will believe it; or, at least, there will not be enough of the credulous to permit an improbable lie to flourish. Then the servile deception, which is a necessary attendant of great inequality of condition, cannot be, and is not, as frequent here as in Europe. A mechanic will be very apt to tell any man his mind who offends him, whether he be a governor or merely a brother in the trade.

"Moral influence is also quite as strong in the United States, as in the most moral countries of the east. Indeed, I know but one cause why deception should be more active here than in Europe, while I can see and do know a multitude why it should not. The frequency of elections certainly gives rise to a greater frequency of those amiable misrepresentations that are so peculiar to all political struggles. But, in point of effect, these election lies, as they are called, defeat themselves; they indeed do even more; they often defeat the truth, as most people are predisposed to incredulity. And yet, four fifths of our elections pass away like this you have just witnessed, without exciting sufficient interest to raise a lie about them at all.

"Facts, undeniable, manifest, and, to an American, familiar facts, do certainly often assume to the unpractised ears of an European, an air of startling exaggeration. There appears in mankind a disposition always to believe too much, or to believe too little. The exact and true medium is hit by very few, who, by uniting a sufficiency of experience to a necessary amount of native penetration, are enabled to estimate

testimony with accuracy. I have repeatedly felt, while in Europe, the embarrassment of encountering those who were disposed to believe miracles on the subject of my country, and those who were not disposed to believe that things, under any circumstances, could vary materially from the state in which they existed, before their own eyes. Even educated men cease to resemble each other in this respect, for all the books in the world cannot qualify a man to estimate the power of his species half so well as personal observation. Our very obstinacy in incredulity on practical things, goes to prove the general sense of mankind concerning the value of experience, by showing how apt we are to refuse credit to acts which exceed any thing we have ourselves witnessed. Perhaps, in a country where so much is actually done, there is some disposition, on the part of vulgar minds, to exceed possibility in their anticipations, and even in their narrations, but this would prove the quality rather than the amount of our misrepresentation. On the whole, I incline to the opinion, that there are more untruths told in denying the unparalleled advances of this country, than in affirming it."

TO SIR EDWARD WALLER, BART.

&c. &c.

Washington, ——

Our passage from New-York to Philadelphia, though the distance is less than ninety miles, was made, as is so usual here, by land and by water. In consequence of the unequalled facilities offered by their rivers, bays, and sounds, the Americans enjoy

in a very large portion of their country, the means of travelling that are cheap and commodious to a degree that is unknown in any other country. Of the steam-boats I have already spoken; but I do not remember to have said any thing concerning their extraordinary cheapness. The passage money is sometimes little more than nominal. I have been conveyed in a spacious, convenient, and even elegant boat, the distance of forty miles, for something less than a shilling sterling. This was certainly cheaper than common, but the price of a passage, (food included,) from New-York to Albany, varies from two to four dollars, according to the style and nature of your accommodations. For the lowest sum, you travel better than in any European boat I have ever yet seen; and for the highest, if the excessive crowds be excepted, with a degree of comfort and abundance that is really next to incredible.

I think the first thing that strikes you at an American table, is the liberality with which it is supplied. The excessive abundance is a fault. The innkeepers seem to understand that a traveller can eat but a certain quantity, and they appear nearly indifferent as to the quality of the articles in which he may choose to indulge. Thus game, fish, and flesh, are placed before him in very liberal quantities, and he is allowed to choose between them. What he leaves is silently removed, pay being expected only for that which is consumed. Of course the prices and the quality of the viands, no less than the style in which they are served, differ very materially in a country of such vast extent. In the older States, particularly in the vicinity of the large towns, the expenses of the inns are greater than in the interior, though, compared with their comfort and abundance, never equal to that which we pay in most of Europe. Foreign travellers are, however, often deceived on the subject, from ignorance of knowing how to choose. The

stage-houses, though frequently the best inns, very often deserve to be classed among the worst. The traveller in a stage is commonly obliged to take such fare as the stage-house affords. There is no posting, and consequently those connected lines of excellent inns, which are to be found over most of England, and which are prepared for the accommodation of travellers who are willing to pay a little more than common, for personal indulgence, are unknown here. But still, a native of the country, and especially one of higher pretensions, travels in all the older States of America, with vastly more comfort than a stranger would be apt to suppose. He is familiar with his privileges, and he knows how to assert them without offence; while the foreigner either submits unnecessarily to privations, from an exaggerated opinion of the danger of offending a people, of whose equality he has an absurd and confused opinion, or he gives rational cause of disgust, by assuming airs that should be practised nowhere, and which can never with perfect impunity be practised here.

We left New-York in a steam-boat for Brunswick, a small city in the State of New-Jersey. At this place we found no less than thirteen stages, ready to convey those who proceeded to the river Delaware. The number of the coaches varies according to the amount of travelling, and on some occasions I was told it exceeded twenty.

In these vehicles, the passengers are disposed by a very simple and quiet process, and with an expedition that marks all the movements of these active people. You are only to imagine a hundred passengers, arriving with their baggage at a point of debarkation, whence, in less than ten minutes of time, they were to proceed in coaches, to fancy the uproar and confusion that would occur in most countries. The steam-boat lines, as they are called, manage the matter differently.

Some little time before the boat arrives, the passengers give in their names, and receive in return, tickets, which bear the numbers of the coaches in which they are to proceed. As the masters of the boats have a method of making these arrangements, which is analogous to the common sense customs of the country on all matters which relate to the interior regulations of society, I will explain it.

You will readily suppose that all classes of people are to be found travelling in these public and cheap conveyances; some little address is therefore necessary to dispose of an assemblage which is so motley, and whose members are of necessity to be brought in such familiar contact. The master of the boat knew Cadwallader, and to him he immediately gave ticket No. 1; not that the stage was better than the rest, but because it was necessary to keep some division of the subject in his own mind, and this was probably the most natural. My companion pointed to me, and I received No. 1, also. There were two or three pretty, genteel looking women, with their male friends, who received the same sort of tickets, until the stage was filled. Then came Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6, with nearly the same quality of travellers. In one or two instances I heard requests urged, that families, or parties, might be placed together, and several changes were made in order to accommodate the applicants. There were two or three vehicles filled with jolly sons of the ocean, who appeared to relish each other's society better than they would have relished ours; and the carriage in the rear brought on a dark bevy of the descendants of Ham. When we reached the shore, each one sought his number; the baggage, which had been previously marked with chalk, was transferred to its proper vehicle, and the whole line was in swift motion, in less than the prescribed time.

In order to get a view of the country, I had begged

a seat on the dicky, by the side of the coachman. As the driver of No. 1. gave the movement to all who came after him, he was, of course, the most distinguished whip of the whole procession. My companion certainly deserved his honours, for he not only managed his team with great dexterity, but he showed the qualities of judgment and temper in that degree which I think distinguishes most of the native coachmen of this country. They are commonly a reasoning and discreet race, compared to so many of their prototypes in Europe, and consequently they are humane. A little discourse soon brought us acquainted, and to my amazement I found the coachman was also a sailor, and that a year or two before, he had actually been the coxswain of a commodore! He had driven a public coach in England, a private coach in South America, and now he was driving No. 1. of the steam-boat line at home! "Where were you born?" I asked. "Over there, in that house you see against the side of the hill," he answered, pointing with his whip. "I took to the seas about the same time I took to horses, and so I have been driving and getting a wet jacket, turn about, two or three seasons at a time, these five and twenty years. But my pipe is out now for the seas, since I broke my arm, in which there is scarce strength enough left to hold a bucket of water to the heads of my horses." Here was a striking case of the diversity of employment which is so common in America. The very pursuits which, in Europe, are perhaps the most opposed to each other, were here successfully exercised by the same man. When I mentioned the fact to Cadwallader, he told me that such professional incongruities were far from rare, and that one of the best drivers of a public coach he had ever known, was a man who had diversified his life by sometimes going to sea. Indeed, I am persuaded there is no one thing which will more astonish an observant and good

humoured traveller through this country, than the extraordinary aptitude that the common Americans display in the exercise of callings which are thought to be as much opposed to each other in qualification as that of a coachman and that of a coxswain of a man-of-war.

We found the roads very tolerably good, the horses excellent, the coaches, though not exceedingly easy, well enough. When we entered Trenton, the coach was stopped by Cadwallader, and we descended at an inn, which, as it afterwards appeared, had no connexion with the stages. Our example was followed by one or two more, the rest of the travellers proceeding to the regular stage-house. I mention this little circumstance, as it may serve to give an idea of a description of inns in this country, of which even observant travellers in it do not often get any notion, but which, nevertheless, abound in all the northern and eastern States. Under favour of my friend's experience, I have entered fifty such, some not quite as good, and some even better than the one I am about to describe:—

At Bispham's, Trenton, we were received by the landlord with perfect civility, but without the slightest shade of obsequiousness. The deportment of the innkeeper was manly, courteous, and even kind; but there was that in his air, which sufficiently proved that both parties were expected to manifest the same qualities. We were asked if we all formed one party, or whether the gentlemen who alighted from number one, wished to be by themselves. The reply was, that we wished to be alone. We were shown into a neat well-furnished little parlour, where our supper made its appearance in the course of twenty minutes. The table contained many little delicacies, such as game, oysters, and choice fish, and several things were named to us as at hand, if needed. Cadwalla-

der had tea, while I took coffee. The former was excellent, the latter, as usual, indifferent enough. The papers of New-York and Philadelphia were brought in at our request, and we sat, with our two candles, before a cheerful fire, reading them as long as we pleased. Our bed-chambers were spacious, well furnished, and as neat as possible, and the beds as good as one usually finds them out of France. In the morning we left the house before breakfast, in order to rejoin our steam-boat line, which took the river a short mile from the place where we slept. Now, for these accommodations, which were just as good, with one solitary exception, (water-closets,) as you would meet in the better order of English provincial inns, and much better in the quality and abundance of the food, we paid the sum of 4*s.* 6*d.* sterling each. I confess I did not think it was enough, and proposed to my companion to make an addition. "Put up your purse," he said, smiling; "all we ask is, that when you get back, you will merely tell what you have seen. This man has his price, and will take neither more nor less" You must also remember, that in America, when you pay the regular price for any thing, you commonly have paid all. I have never known a servant ask for a *douceur;* and though people of a certain class generally give a trifle to the man who cleans boots, or to him who does any little extra services, neither waiter, chambermaid, nor any one else, demands it. It is just the same in the steam-boats, stages, hackney-coaches, &c., when you get the regular price, you know all the necessary expense, and I use the word necessary, in reference to custom no less than right.*

* A trifle is commonly expected for transferring the baggage from the steam-boats to the coaches, and *vice versa*. Sometimes an European, or an experienced American servant in the largo towns, will look as if he *expected* a present.

I have been in a vast number of these inns. So far from putting people three in a bed, they apologize for the necessity of putting friends in the same room when it is necessary; and on the slightest hesitation at such an arrangement being manifested, they do all they can to obviate the necessity.

I do not suppose that it is possible to arrive at any very exact estimate of the taverns in this country. They are certainly more numerous than I remember to have ever seen them before, especially on all the great routes. A vast number are very bad, and it might be difficult for even a native to travel in his own carriage any great distance without occasionally encountering some of the sort; but, always confining my remarks to the older and more northern States, and making the exceptions which are peculiar to the two countries, I am of opinion that there are quite as many good taverns in America as in England, while there are infinitely more bad ones. The former, certainly, do not occur at every five miles; but in order to institute a fair comparison, it is necessary to remember the vast difference in the sizes of the two countries. In this simple fact exists the secret of the apparent difference in the quality of the taverns. But an American inn, and, indeed, the inn of every other country except England, is almost always deficient in the one great *nameless* convenience already mentioned in this letter. The servants here are not so good as in Europe generally, and much inferior to those in England. I make my comparisons with your inns, because they are, as a class, more uniformly good than those of any other country, and because the best of yours are unquestionably among the best of the world. I know no other country indeed in which the inns will compare, on the whole, with those of the older parts of America. The inns of France, in the large towns, cleanliness excepted, are

about equal to the inns in the large towns here; but the best inns of the villages are vastly inferior.*

The passage down the Delaware, though picturesque, and far from unpleasing, will bear no comparison with that on the Hudson. Still, one may get an idea of the great beauty of all these splendid views by recalling the fact that numberless European travellers who have made the excursion to Philadelphia before going north, extol the former river to the skies.

A few miles below Trenton, Joseph Bonaparte has sought a retreat from the cares and mortifications of the old world. He lives in a sort of retirement which embraces a large circle of friends and dependants. The family of Bonaparte is already getting to be numerous in America, and it is probable that in a few years the name will be found in the rolls of Congress: a century hence it may possibly be seen on the signs of the cities. Besides the ex-king, (who has assumed the title of Compte de Survilliers, the name of a little village which lies adjacent to the splendid château of Morfontaine,) there are a son of Lucien, (married to the oldest daughter of Joseph,) a son of Jerome by his first, or the American wife, and two sons of the hapless Murat. Charles, the son of Lucien, has children born in the country, and who consequently are possessed of the rights of natives. This young man is already favourably known for his devotion to, and for his attainments in science. He is said to be simple in his habits, and to have found favour among the republicans of these regions.

The Compte de Survilliers, I believe, does not mingle much with the society of the country. He

* If we take cooking into the account, there are inns now, in the northern and western parts of France, that are quite equal to the best English provincial inns. Those who are very luxurious in their beds may even think them better.

does not speak the language; and, as French is not so generally understood here as in Europe, that circumstance alone would oppose obstacles to his wishes, did he even feel a desire to live more in the world. He is said to be unassuming when he does appear in public; and, in consequence, is rather in favour than otherwise.* Many absurd conjectures were hazarded at the time on the probable consequences, had Napoleon succeeded in his project of reaching the United States. These conjectures, like a thousand others connected with the events of the hour, are already forgotten among the evanescent interests of the past, but it was recalled to my mind as I gazed at the secluded and irregular château of his brother. "What would Napoleon have done with your institutions, had he reached your shores?" was the question I put to Cadwallader. "He would have found some agreeable site, like this of Joseph, and told his tales of Italy and of France to travellers in the west, instead of telling them to travellers in the east. As no one man had any exceeding influence in creating our institutions, rely on it they will not speedily fall before the talents, or even virtues, of any single individual. That which we owe to ourselves as the work of our own hands, our own hands will preserve; and while kings can find on earth no more peaceful asylum than that

* A few years since, the house of the Compte de Survilliers was burnt by accident. A few days after the conflagration, a card appeared in a journal of the vicinity, in which the sufferer, after returning thanks to the inhabitants of the neighbouring village of Bordentown, for their promptitude in coming to his assistance, alluded to the circumstance, that none of his effects had been purloined in the midst of the confusion in terms of commendation. The writer understood that the thanks were well enough received, for they were usual, but that a momentary offence was given to the inhabitants, by any man presuming to thank them for common honesty! The people of the vicinity have, however, already forgotten their pique, for they speak of thier neighbour with great kindness.

we offer them, imagination cannot conceive a less profitable theatre for the enactment of a royal drama. We are ready to extend hospitality to both parties—subjects who are tired of their kings, and kings who are tired of their subjects; but the great political rôle of this country must be played in our own simple fashion, and with scenery and decorations that shall suit the national taste."

I found Philadelphia remarkable for its regularity of construction, its neatness and its quietude. It has much more the air of a better sort of English town, or, in fact, of a quarter of London, than even New-York, though there are points of marked difference, as well as of resemblance, between the City of Brotherly-love and the capital of the mother country. The bricks are not painted, and the eye immediately misses the gay, cheerful look which distinguishes New-York. Herein it resembles a well-built and clean town of England; but its exceeding neatness is almost peculiar to this country, aided as it is by objects of ornament that are not found in the streets of any English city. A vast number of the door-steps are of white marble; many of the caps and sills of the windows, and even parts of the side-walks, are chiselled in the same material. Indeed, the profusion of this stone in the best streets serves to enliven the appearance of the place, though I acknowledge that I have some doubts of the taste which creates so violent a contrast as that between white and red.

In architecture, Philadelphia, beyond all doubt, excels its great commercial neighbour. The private buildings do not materially vary from those I have described, though I think it may be said there is less taste for luxury, generally, in this place than in New-York. If any thing, the furniture is more simple, though always neat, and often exceedingly rich. A gentleman of Philadelphia is about as well lodged as that portion of the English nobility and gentry who

are not the proprietors of capital town-houses. This brings him on a level with most of the Frenchmen below those who singly occupy large hotels.

Of public edifices there is a larger and better display than in New-York, churches alone excepted. A good and an improving taste is certainly prevalent in this city on the subject of architecture. I believe it is generally admitted, that the finest modern edifice we know is the Bourse of Paris. You will be surprised, perhaps, when I say, that, next to this exquisite work of art, I rank the Bank of the United States in this city. There are certainly a hundred buildings in Europe of a very similar style, and of far more laboured ornaments; but I cannot remember one, in which simplicity, exquisite proportion, and material, unite to produce so fine a whole. It is doric, without side colonnades, not particularly large, though of sufficient size for effect, and of white marble. The church of the Madeleine at Paris, for instance, when completed, should be an edifice of a vast deal more of pretension; but, notwithstanding its admirable position, its great size, and its immense colonnades, I do not believe it will ever produce so pleasing an effect as this chaste and severe little temple of Plutus. It is certain that the Madeleine stands in a position to try its powers of pleasing to the utmost; for, flanked by the Garde Meuble, and fronting the façade of the Chambre des Députés, no imperfection is permitted to escape, without quick comparative criticism. I am not sure that the Bank of the United States does not owe some of its charms to the fact that it has no rival near; but even that circumstance is a merit in the architect, since he could have had no other eye than that of the mind to regulate his proportions.

Philadelphia has other clever edifices. There is another banking-house in classic taste, and several more buildings erected for the monied institutions, (a tribute to gold, perhaps, to be expected here) are in

a very good style. An immense building is in the course of construction for a Penitentiary, and wears a promising air. The Fair Mount water-works are well worthy the examination of every stranger.

But you, who know, by melancholy experience, how little there is actually worth viewing in the oldest countries of the earth, after the first interest of curiosity has been appeased, should not be surprised to learn, that an American city can contain very little to reward the eye, unless that which is seen should be taken in connexion with the moral agents that have assisted to bring it into existence. In the latter respect, one has cause of astonishment at each step taken in this rapidly advancing country, and in no place more than in Philadelphia.

New-York is a great commercial town; but this city is more devoted to manufacturing. It is much cheaper than the former place, and in many particulars admirably adapted to maintain its present pursuits. There is no want of capital; and it is highly probable that the day is not distant when it shall become a modified, or improved, Manchester or Birmingham. Its present population is about 140,000.*

I will not say we found in Philadelphia a better bred, or a more enlightened society, than we found in New-York, for this would not be strictly true; but we found it less interrupted by the intrusions of that portion of the world which is purely commercial. The constant and vast accessions to the population of the latter city keep society in a constant state of fermentation, as I have already mentioned: and it is not always easy to tell into which of its currents or bubblings one has fallen. It is more easy to keep pace

* The writer has more than once said, that Philadelphia city contains, at the present day, about 150,000, and New-York near 200,000, exclusive of the village of Brooklyn, a suburb on the Long Island side of the strait or arm of the sea, which must have of itself quite 12,000.

with the movements of this tranquil town. With the exception of those who are literally men of the world, and they are not numerous, I should say also, that the inheritance of Penn is in a slight degree more provincial in its habits and manners than the sister city.

Instead of following the river in our route to Baltimore, we went by a road of the interior. The first day's journey was through one of the most highly cultivated and richest agricultural districts of this, or of any other, quarter of the world. The appearance of the country, with the exceptions already named, was essentially English, though I have seen no part of England where such farm-houses and barns are to be seen as we met with here. The villages are few, and but small, though there are two or three market-towns of some size on the route. The natural scenery was rather like that of Normandy than that of England, though the artificial parts were much in the English taste, always excepting hedges.

The Susquehannah was crossed by a noble wooden bridge, which was said to be a mile long. This was the twentieth of these immense constructions in wood, that I have seen since my landing; nor are they the smallest subjects of my surprize. The great enterprise and exceeding ingenuity of the people are here displayed to great advantage. It is only necessary to discover the want of a bridge, or a canal, to insure an effort, and commonly a successful one, to bring it into existence. A bridge, a quarter, a half, or even a whole mile, in length, as is the case with that of Columbia (across the Susquehannah), is no extraordinary undertaking for the inhabitants of a country which, forty years before, and often less, was an entire wilderness. I scarcely know how to give you a correct idea of one of these avenues of timber. As they are commonly thrown across some vast river, or perhaps a lake, on whose banks the native forest is to be found, the material is cheap, and easy to be

transported. The cost, therefore, is in no proportion to the magnitude of the work. They are built on different plans; some being as rude and simple as possible, and others forming beautiful models of scientific skill, and even of taste. I should think a majority of them are suspended by chains. Some are, however, suspended by wood, from arches of timber, that rest either on piers of stone, or on well-secured foundations of frame-work. The better sort are covered, having roofs and even windows; so that it often happens that the traveller, perhaps whilst ruminating on the recent origin of this country, finds himself journeying through an edifice which is from a quarter of a mile to a mile in length.

The State of Pennsylvania possesses a population, less identified with the great national character, than any other member of this confederation. It is computed that about one-third of all its inhabitants are the descendants of German emigrants. They are remarkably tenacious of their own customs and opinions, and even of their language, though the whole are gradually giving way before the superior influence of the English character. I conversed with several of the yeomen of this description of inhabitants. They spoke English with an accent as if it were a language acquired after infancy, and it was easy to trace a difference in the activity of their thoughts, as compared with those of most of their countrymen. I found them, however, possessed of the same notions of political liberty, which have been so long established in this country, as to have become essential ingredients in the characters of all its inhabitants. I met with others, whose descent could only be traced in their names; their manners, language, and opinions, having already undergone the final change.

The existence of so large a body of people, possessing a language and prejudices of their own, and living so near to each other, as to render it easy to

perpetuate them all (for a time at least), has not been without its inconvenience to the State. It is said, that their hostility to innovation has induced these people to oppose the introduction of common schools, a policy which, if much longer persevered in, is in itself sufficient to throw their community a century in the rear of their neighbours. There are other establishments of the Germans in different parts of the Union, but none near so wealthy nor important as the people just named. There are also the French of Louisiana, the Spaniards of Florida, and a few Hollanders in New-Jersey, New-York, &c. &c. But the whole of these slight differences in identity of character, are fast disappearing, and it is probable that another generation will effect their extinction. As near as I can learn, quite nine millions of the ten who compose the white population of this country are descendants of the English (Irish and Scotch included); the rest may spring from half the other nations of Europe, chiefly, however, the Germans, the Dutch, and the French, and in proportions agreeably to the order in which they are named. But of this million, assuming the estimate to be exact, which in itself is not quite certain, more than half have probably lost all the distinctive marks of their origin, if we except those who are actually Europeans by birth.*

I do not think one meets as many foreigners established in this country as the circumstances might give reason to believe. There are particular places where they assemble, and where they are rather striking by their numbers, but, in the interior, I have frequently

* The writer is told that an immense emigration to the United States has occurred since he left it. One statement says that 22,000 Irish alone, arrived at the city of New-York during the last year. The citizens complain of their riotous and disorderly conduct, and it is thought some severe remedy will be adopted to cure an evil that is getting to be serious.

travelled days without meeting with an individual of the sort to know him.*

Before we quitted the State of Pennsylvania, there was a sensible change for the worse, in the appearance of the country, and we entered Maryland at a point but little adapted to give us the most favourable impressions of the effects of a slave population. The aspect of things, however, changed materially for the better as we approached Baltimore, whose environs, seen as I saw them in a mild day late in the autumn, when a second spring so often seems about to open on the vegetation of this climate, were as pleasing as those of any town I remember.

Baltimore is a neat, well-built city, of near 70,000 inhabitants. It contains many excellent private houses, and some public edifices, in better taste than common; but, like Philadelphia, it wants the gay, animated look which renders New-York so very remark-

* By the last census of the State of New-York, there were 40,430 *aliens*, in a population of 1,616,458. But this enumeration is liable to explanation. A native of Europe who has become a citizen is not an alien, while a native of the United States who is not a citizen, is. The latter class, though not very important, is more numerous than one would suppose. There were many natives who took sides with the crown in the war of 1776, and who still retain their characters of British subjects, being pensioners, &c. &c. although they prefer to reside, and even to leave their descendants in the place of their birth. Such persons are aliens of course, in the eyes of the law. There are others who have come to the country with an intention to reside, and to establish their children, who are averse to throw aside their native allegiance. These continue aliens. There are others, again, who intend to become citizens, but who have not yet completed the term of probation. In addition to these explanations, the city of New-York receives more emigrants, perhaps, than all the rest of the United States together, and it is the chosen residence of foreign merchants established in the country. It may be well to add, that there were 5,610 paupers included in this census of the State of New-York, or about one pauper to every 288 of the inhabitants. Of this number, 1,742 were in the city of New-York alone. A vast number of paupers from Europe are dishonestly thrown upon the shores of this country.

able. The difference is to be ascribed to the want of paint, and to the greater activity of business in the latter place. We found here, as indeed on most of our recent route, excellent inns, and took up our abode for several days.*

I saw in this city, for the first time since my arrival, a monument erected to Washington. It is a noble column, in stone, and is admirably placed on elevated ground, in what is now a suburb, but which I believe it is intended shall one day become a public square. The want of these squares is a great defect in all the cities I have seen, though it is one which will soon be repaired. The plans of most of them embrace more or less areas of the sort, and some of them are already beginning to be enjoyed. There is also another monument, in very good taste, to perpetuate the memory of those citizens who fell in a skirmish with the British, during the last war, in defence of this city. The whole number was not great, (some thirty or forty militia, I believe,) but it was thought their quality gave them a particular claim on the gratitude of their townsmen.

You may remember that General Ross, after his successful attack on Washington, made a movement threatening Baltimore Your countrymen possessed an incalculable advantage in the command of the sea, by means of which they not only directed their attacks against the most defenceless points, but they were always enabled to keep their adversaries in an

* An idea may be formed of the great amount of travelling in the United States, by the size of the inns. One was building in Baltimore before the writer left America, which promised to exceed in size any he remembers. The City Hotel, in New-York, is a vast edifice; and, in a great number of the western villages, the writer saw taverns that were as large as many of the Paris hotels. In a country where domestics are never abundant, and are often bad, this disproportion between the number of the guests and the attendants is a striking fault.

embarrassing ignorance of their force. Thus, about the period of the expedition to Washington, I see, by the journals of that day, an opinion prevailed in America that England, released from her European war, had sent Lord Hill against them, at the head of a large army. It is quite possible that agents of your commanders were industrious in circulating a rumour that seemed so very probable. The Americans say, that their ignorance of the force of General Ross alone saved him from destruction.

But Baltimore was a far more important place than Washington, and time had been given to collect an army of citizens. The whole affair terminated in a hot skirmish between an advanced party of some two or three thousand Americans, and a portion of the British army. The former retreated, as had been expected, but the English commander lost his life in the rencontre. His successor wisely abandoned an attempt that must have terminated in the annihilation of his force, which was neither strong enough to carry the defences of the place, nor to protect itself against an attack when suffering under reverses, and from an enemy who would soon have been apprized of its weakness. A bombardment of a fort, which was defended by regular troops, proved also totally useless.*

* It is worthy of remark, and deserving of explanation, that no attack, of any importance, against an American fort by ships, has ever been successful, while a great number have been signally defeated. The reader of American history is familiar with the affairs of Fort Moultrie, Fort Mifflin, Fort Boyer, &c. &c.; but where is he to find the reverse of the picture? The writer has heard more than one professional man say, it is just as impossible for ships to reduce forts (under tolerably equal circumstances) as it is for forts to stop the passage of ships when favoured by wind and tide. This theory, if true, is consoling to humanity, since one should always wish success to the assailed, especially when they defend a town against the assaults of hirelings. The exceptions of Algiers and Navarino prove nothing, since the defenders were semi-barbarous; and at Copenhagen,

We have been pleased with our residence at Baltimore. It contains a great many polished and enlightened men, and perhaps, there is no part of this Union where society is more elegant, or the women handsomer. The latter circumstance soothed my feelings during the delay of a fortnight.—Adieu.

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the victory was over a flotilla rather than over the batteries. The destruction of the little work on the Potomac, when the British ascended that river, was clearly an evacuation and not a defeat, and was decided on from an exaggerated notion of the power of the troops in its rear, and not at all in consequence of the marine attack. It was abandoned at the first shot.

NOTES.

NOTE A.—*Page* 6.

"I owe you an explanation," my friend continued, after the usual language of civility, "for the little interest that I have manifested in your persevering attempts to obtain such English works as may form a preparation for your intended travels in America. I will make no further secret of the cause, and when you hear my sentiments on this matter, I think you will learn those which are common to a very great majority of my countrymen.

"At the period when I grew into manhood, that bitterness of feeling which had been created in the United States towards Great Britain, by the struggle of the revolution, had greatly subsided, in a return of the kindness which was natural to affinity of blood, and to a community of language, usages, and opinions. Our object in the war had been obtained. When we reverted to its events, it was rather with exultation than hostility. Scenes of personal suffering, and perhaps of personal wrongs, were forgotten in the general prosperity. It is not necessary to ascribe any peculiar qualities of magnanimity, or of Christian charity, to the American people, in order to maintain that fewer instances of a generous and manly forgetfulness can be furnished in the history of nations, than what they generally manifested towards their former rulers. The past presented recollections on which they were not ashamed to dwell, while the future was replete with the most animating hopes. In such an enviable position, a community, like an individual, must have been odiously constituted to find pleasure in the contemplation of any but the brighter parts of human character. We gave the English credit for the possession of all those virtues, which, in the weakness of natural vanity, we are fond of ascribing to ourselves. There were few excellencies on which we grounded our own national pride, that we were disposed to deny them. It would have been difficult to ascribe different results to causes whose influence was thought to be felt by the two nations in common. They were brave, for they were free, they were virtuous, for they were religious; and they were religious, because we worshipped before the same altars. In

our eyes, there was perfection in their literature and arts, for if it did not exist there, it was a stranger to us, since we knew no other. In short, as our triumph was indisputable, we could afford to forget the recent feud, and we were fond of cherishing the present amity, since, with all the feelings of a reading and highly civilized people, we delighted in the glory of our fathers. Had we churlishly denied our connexion with that of England, we should have left ourselves without an ancestry. So very deeply was this sentiment engrafted in our opinions, it might almost be said in our natures, that, with some exceptions that grew out of the opposition of internal politics, most of our sympathies were with the English, in the fierce struggle that soon agitated Christendom. We exulted in her successes over the arms of a people who had lent us their treasure, and shed the blood of their brave in the quarrel which gave us a rank among the nations of the world. A momentary and heedless enthusiasm, which manifested itself in favour of the French at the commencement of their revolution, had been checked in the government by the steadiness of Washington, and had early been suppressed in the people, by the excesses into which the leaders of that revolution suffered themselves to be hurried. Without reflecting how much of the merit of evidence must depend on the character of individuals, we gave credit to the official documents of England, to the prejudice of all others; and, removed ourselves from the necessity of political deception, or of matured misrepresentation, we refused to believe it could exist in a people who affirmed what they had to promulge, not only in our language but with all those forms with which we had ourselves so long been accustomed to add solemnity and weight to the truth. Destitute of a literature of our own, but rich in the possession of that which we derived from our ancestors, we were content to submit our minds to the continued domination of writers, on whom it was believed that the mantle of Elijah had rested in virtue of their birth-right. So far as Europe was concerned, for many years after the peace of 1783, the great mass of the American people saw with English eyes, and judged with English prejudices. This was a fearful position to be occupied by a nation whose policy is so greatly controlled by the influence of public opinion. It was one which could not peacefully continue, in the actual condition of the world.

"To me the gloomy period of 1792 is almost a matter of history. A mild and reflecting people, who, in their own case, had known so well how to temper resistance to oppression, could not long sympathize in the movements of men who

affected to think that liberty could only be propitiated by oblations of innocent blood. Particular services to ourselves were forgotten in the general offences against justice and humanity. I have heard that the brief ardour which had been excited in favour of the French was succeeded by the coldness of disappointment. It is more than probable that the reaction hastened the renewal of those ancient attachments to which I have alluded, and which certainly existed, in the greatest force, at the time to which my personal recollections distinctly extend.

"Although the struggles of domestic politics had, in some measure, created a sort of opposition to English supremacy, it was altogether too feeble to shake the deep-rooted and confiding faith of the nation. There was so much that was true, blended with a great deal that was ideal in our admiration of English character, and, more than all, there was so much which, admirable or not, resembled ourselves, that it was not easy to depreciate its merits. Detractors were heard, it is true; but they either declaimed with vulgar coarseness, or uttered their opinions so feebly, as to leave reasonable doubts of their own sincerity. This extraordinary mental bondage continued, with no very important interruption, during the first ten years of the present century. The amicable feelings of the nation had, indeed, suffered some violent shocks by the operation of the foreign policy of Great Britain, the effects of which were as unceasingly proclaimed by one political party of our country, as were those of the decrees of Napoleon by the other. But the hostility they created was directed rather to the English ministry than to the nation. It is no small evidence of the extent of our prejudice, that, while the maritime condemnations of the English, though conducted with all the pomp of gown and wig, were mainly imputed to the cupidity of individuals, those of Napoleon, which were effected by a nod of his head and the agency of a few *gens d'armes*, were, with as little hesitation, ascribed to the established perfidy of the French character! Had not England herself disturbed this mental ascendancy, I do not see any plausible reason why it might not have continued to the present hour. The jealousy of a sensitive rivalry, however, began to manifest itself prematurely; and as an unreasonable desire of exercising, unduly, her political dominion over the colonies precipitated a separation of the two countries, so did her extreme sensitiveness on the subject of profit hasten a mental emancipation that might easily have been deferred, until at least the numbers and importance of the American people had borne them beyond the possibility of

foreign influence. I think that this jealousy may be divided into two classes—that of calculation, and that of feeling. The quick-sighted and practised merchants of England were not slow to discover that there was reason to apprehend a rival in a nation who possessed, in addition to all their hereditary aptitude and knowledge, such rare, natural, commercial advantages. Though not fond of admitting the fact, they could not deny, even to themselves, that the very absence of personal restraint, which, by giving energy and interest to the efforts of individuals, had accumulated the commercial grandeur of their own empire, was possessed by the infant republics to a degree that was hitherto unknown in the annals of the civilized world. The politicians of England found leisure, even amid the cares of their great European struggle, to turn their attention to a subject that is ever considered by her statesmen with the watchfulness with which we regard the most remote assaults on the materials of our existence. Had it not been their present interests to retain us as customers, it is probable that the efforts of the English ministry to curtail our growing prosperity, would have been far more decisive and manifest. It is thought, too, that for a long time they were deluded with the futile hope of seeing our growing power weakened by a dissolution of the confederacy; a movement that would have left us with all our wants, and with a lessened ability to furnish them with a domestic supply. There was, also, a period of political alarm when the aristocracy of England trembled for its ascendancy. The spectacle of a democratic government, existing on an extended scale, could not, in such a crisis, find favour in their eyes. The greater its success, the greater was its offence against those prophetic opinions which had early predicted its fall. Though a large proportion, even of the hereditary counsellors of England, were exclusively occupied with the more momentous concerns of the hour, or wilfully shut their eyes on a perspective which presented so few objects of gratification, some there were too sagacious and too reasoning not to see that the diffusion of intelligence, to which they owed their own national supremacy, was in danger of being exceeded, and that too from a quarter of the world which they had been accustomed to regard with the complacency of acknowledged superiors. Still, circumstances beyond their control admitted of no measures likely to retard the event they deprecated. The States of America were therefore kept as much as possible out of view, or were regarded with an indifference in which there was much more of affectation than of reality. In this state of things, a deep, settled aversion to

America grew in the minds of that portion of the English community who possessed sufficient knowledge to be aware of her existence at all, or who did not believe us a people too insignificant for attention. If there were any exceptions to this rule, they were no more than the members of a class of philanthropists which, unhappily, bears, in all countries, too limited a proportion to the mass of mankind. In a nation where pens are so active, there is but a brief interval between the conception of an idea and its publication. By referring to the daily and periodical journals of the country, you will find that whenever it was thought necessary to mention America, it was invariably done in terms of disparagement and reproach. It is even said that the government of an empire that boasts itself to be the most enlightened and magnanimous in the world, not only employed mercenary pens to vituperate, in periodical journals of the most pretending character, a people they affected to despise, but that it sought itinerant circulators of calumny, who journeyed, or pretended to journey through our States, in order to discover and to expose the nakedness of the land. The latter circumstance I am inclined to discredit, for I cannot think that any English ministry would have had the weakness to bestow their money where there was so little talent to invite reward. Of the former I shall say no more than that it is implicitly believed by many enlightened men in America, and that if it be not true, it is unfortunate that more care had not been taken to avoid the grounds of a suspicion that seems so plausible. Here, then, you have the remarkable spectacle of two people of a common origin, and possessing, in common, so many of the governing principles which decide character and control policy, acted on by directly contrary influences. While the American was fondly, and, one might say, blindly clinging to his ancient attachments, his advances were met by jealousy, or repelled by contempt. Whatever may be the future consequences of this unnatural repulse, America has no reason to lament its occurrence. It has already relieved her from the thraldom of mental bondage. So generally and so forcibly is this truth felt, that while the war of '76 is called the war of the revolution, that of '12 is emphatically termed the war of independence. It is beyond a doubt that, as there were in America men of spirits too lofty, and of an intelligence too enlightened not to have rebelled against the besotted dependence of their countrymen on foreign opinion, so there were in England philanthropists too pure and too generous not to rejoice in any human prosperity. But these were no more than exceptions to those general rules which marked

the feelings and opinions of the two nations, so far as those of England were at all active in the matter. I say active, for it is certain that, even to this hour, the great majority of that nation neither think nor care in the least about a people so remote, and who have never acted a conspicuous part in the struggles of their own hemisphere. Indeed, the American, conscious of the possession of physical advantages which are beyond most of the chances of worldly vicissitudes, and firm in the belief that he enjoys a higher state of moral existence than any other people whatever, little suspects, even now, how completely his country is without the pale of European thought. A vigorous and intellectual population of twelve millions must ever force itself on the notice of statesmen; but, could the fact be ascertained, I do believe it would be found that three out of four of the inhabitants of Europe not only believe we are a people of barbarous manners, but that we have, to say the least, but doubtful claims to be computed among the descendants of Japhet at all. The proofs of this opinion have often occurred to me during my travels; nor are you, my dear ———, the only European of education, by a dozen, who has asked me if my flaxen hair and blue eyes were not deemed a sort of physical anomaly on the other side of the Atlantic!

"Mr. Hodgson says, he was assured by an intelligent American, that had a man, like Wilberforce, travelled among us, and given to the world a fair and honest account of the state of society he saw, the war of 1812 would have been averted. There can be but little doubt that the periodical writers of England dipt their pens too deep in gall. They overacted their parts, and the consequence must fall where it may. I can only say, as a citizen of the United States, who not only loves, but, strange as you may think it, who glories in his country, that if such were the power of that excellent friend of humanity, I rejoice he did not exert it. Though no admirer of the wisdom in which that war was conceived, nor of the skill with which it was conducted, I should be blind to palpable truths, did I not see that it has left my country in the occupancy of a station more worthy of her real power and true character, than the equivocal condition from which she emerged.

"With my opinions, then, of the character of most of the works which form your travelling library, you cannot be surprised that I had so little desire to read them. The contents of most of them, however, are already known to me. It would be vain to deny that they contain many disagreeable truths, for it would be arrogating to ourselves a perfection

which exists nowhere, to say that a traveller of ordinary capacity, who journeys with a view to find fault, should be baffled of his object in the States of America, alone. Still, in most of the cases where I am willing to believe there did exist, on the part of the writers, a fair proportion of honest intention, there was so much utter incapacity to judge of a state of society to which they were worse than strangers, that their opinions may safely be considered little better than worthless. It is often said that we are the subjects of a peculiarly exacting national vanity, and that nothing short of eulogies will ever meet with a favourable reception among us. The good opinion which nations entertain of themselves, is far from being limited to America, though it is not difficult to understand that our pretensions should be particularly offensive to a people, who have so long claimed an exclusive right to those very properties on which we ground our pride. This vanity is imputed to us, however, chiefly because it is thought that, in contemplating the future, expectation outruns probability too far. If it be meant that the people of the United States anticipate more for their country than what reason and experience will justify, I do not believe it. On the contrary, I think that nine out of ten of mankind, there, as elsewhere, fail in the ability to estimate the probable, and speedy importance too, of our country in the scale of nations. Your author, Mr. Hodgson, after a tolerably close inspection of our means, frankly admits, that, were he an American, his hopes would greatly outstrip those of the natives with whom he conversed. But, if it be meant that the American often fails in manner, when he is disposed to draw a comparison between the prospects of his own country, and those of other people, I think nothing is more probable. It is quite evident, that the greater the truth of these predictions, the heavier is the offence against the comity of intercourse. A large majority of those whose voices are loudest on this theme, are men of a class that, in other nations, would either be too ignorant to indulge in any rational speculations on the future at all, or too much engaged in providing for the wants of the hour, to waste their breath on a subject that did not teem with instant profit. But, in what degree is this offence peculiar to Americans, except as hope is more grateful than recollection? I have fifty times listened to the most self-complacent and sweeping claims to national superiority, that were uttered by Englishmen, and by Englishmen of rank, too, who should at least have had the taste to conceal their exultation in the presence of a foreigner. I apprehend that we are sinned against quite as much as we sin in this particular. No

gentleman can deny that the coarse demands of general superiority are alike offensive to taste and breeding. They have created a disgust in the minds of the more intelligent classes, who often, in the spirit of distaste, oppose the very anticipations in which they fondly confide, for no other reason than that they find them oppressive by the freedom with which they are urged. But vanity is the foible of age in communities, as it is of youth in individuals. We have not yet reached that period of national dotage. There is little in the past, however, of which England can fairly boast, in which America may not claim to participate. The arms of our ancestors were wielded in her most vaunted fields; the geniuses of Shakspeare and Milton were awakened in the bosom of a society from which we received our impressions, and if liberty and the law have been transmitted to us from the days of Hampden and Bacon, we have not received them as boons, but taken them as the portions of a birthright. Glorious and ample as has been our heritage, we challenge the keen-eyed and ready criticism of the rest of the world, to decide whether we have imitated the example of the prodigal son. And yet, if it be permitted to a people, to value themselves on any thing, it is surely more reasonable to exult in the cheering prospects of a probable future, than to turn their eyes through the perspective of recollections, in quest of a sickly renown from the past. The greatness of the ancestor may, and does often, prove a reproach to him who would claim a vain distinction from circumstances that he could not have controlled, while he who looks ahead, may justly point with pride to the foundations of glory which his own hand has laid.

"I have said that feeling, no less than calculation, formed one of the causes of the calumny England has undeniably heaped upon America. The operation of this dislike is as various and characteristic, as were the pursuits and humours of its subjects. It was an offence against the geographical sovereignty, which marks England for the seat of empire, to the prejudice of Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, to presume to renounce her dominion at all. It was and is, a constant offence to aristocracy every where, to exhibit an instance of a prosperous and happy democracy. It was a bitter offence against the hierarchical establishment, to demonstrate that religion and order, and morals, could exist without its aid; and it was an offence to the pride of that numerous class, who exulted in being the bravest, because the freest people of the earth, to argue at the bayonet's point, that there was another quite as brave, who was determined to be a little more free. To the American, the different expedients which

have been adopted to disprove, or to undervalue these advantages, are not without amusement. Our government has been termed imbecile, for no better reason than that it did not possess the power to suppress evils which have no existence among us, though it does possess the inestimable power of adapting itself to circumstances, without endangering its foundations by the change. Our manners have been derided, for the simple cause that they differed, and that too, perhaps, less than might be wished, from their own, while their own are far from being a model to the rest of Europe. Our order has been denied, though it is rarely disturbed, except by the *élèves* of her own disciplined system, and our religion scoffed at, though, I think, a reference to the use of figures would demonstrate that while (since the separation) their peculiar faith has been on a comparative decrease among themselves, in consequence of the opposition created by the establishment, it has, with us, been on a comparative increase, because men seldom fail to confess the merits of that which is not too violently obtruded on their notice.

"But, a more general and far safer method of disposing of the question of our unworthiness, is by keeping America entirely out of view. To this hour, and with all the facts known to the world, one reads every day, in works and journals of talent and reputation, that England is the freest among the nations! You may see her claims to philanthropy supported by the fact, that she was the first to destroy the traffic in human flesh; and her distinguished statesmen have not hesitated to affirm, in the face of Europe, that to her is the southern moiety of our hemisphere indebted, for the original acknowledgment of its national existence! It is easy to predict that this is a manner of disposing of things, which may be practised with more facility in the year 1825, than in the year 1850.

"As respects the work of Mr. Hodgson, I have read it, with both pain and pleasure. There is satisfaction at all times, in dwelling on the opinions, though they may prove erroneous, of a discreet and honest man. As he evidently seeks the truth, with a desire of proclaiming it, his very errors are entitled to be treated with respect. Nothing, for instance, however, is more untrue, than to say that service in the revolution forms the chief, or even a very material claim to distinction, in our ordinary intercourse. Society, in America, is constituted precisely as in every other Christian country, breeding, education, family alliances, and wealth, exerting most of their customary influences. It is more true, certainly, as to political distinction, though cases abound of

individuals who even opposed the war of '76, but who have not been thought unworthy of popular favour by their placable countrymen. He has been thrown, by accident, into a highly respectable circle of ancient soldiers, whom he has found in the enjoyment of all their native and merited consideration, and he has mistaken the particular instance for a general rule. He has not, at least, like most of those who went before him, passed wilfully over the abundance of order, morals, religion, and intelligence which eminently distinguishes the bosom of our community, to seek exceptions in the skirts of society, which might serve to amuse at home by their freshness, or to gratify the spleen of our haters by their deformities.

"But there are deep sources of pain in finding, by the confessions of this very writer, how much more inveterate have been the prejudices of his nation, than even one as familiar with the subject as a traveller could have believed. To nine millions of the population of America, it will appear incredible, that England has doubted, nay, still doubts, whether religion or religious instruction exists among them! I write under the observation of four visits to England, and an extensive acquaintance with the habits of my own country, when I affirm, that religion, to say the least, is as much inculcated. and its prescriptions as rigidly observed, in all the northern and middle, and some of the southern States of America, as in the most favoured quarters of England. It is lamentable that an error so injurious in its consequences, so false and so uncharitable in its nature, should have an existence among men who evidently wish to believe the best. Still, while as a man, I lament this miserable error, as an American, I do not fear the consequences. Wilful ignorance is sure to entail its punishment. It has been the misfortune of England to remain in ignorance of America, and of American character, from the day when the pilgrims first touched the rock of Plymouth to the present hour. She banished our ancestors from her bosom, because they would not submit to an oppression against which she herself has since revolted. She cumbered our infant efforts with her vicious legislation, and drove us to a premature majority. It remains to be seen whether she will have us, in our strength, as a friend or an enemy. The time for her election is getting short, and more may hang on the issue than millions, who exult in their present power, are willing to believe. The steady, deluded and confiding friend we once were, it is too late to expect. But a nation which feels no pressure, and which is conscious of no unworthiness, is neither vindictive nor obdurate. We may be disposed to

forgive, though it will be hard indeed to forget. Even the moderated and cautious tone, which is certainly beginning to prevail among her politicians and writers, is not extended to the youthful Hercules with the grace that it might have been offered to the infant in his cradle. We know as well as herself, that the next duplication of our numbers will raise us to her own level. Her dominion over our minds could not have continued, it is true, after we had obtained a literature of our own; still the hold might have been relinquished in amity, and not cast from her in disdain. But a generation has grown to maturity during the prevalence of a miserable infatuation. What a noble promise for the future has England not jeoparded! The decline of empires, though more tardy, is not less certain than that of man. The wane of the British dominion might have been distinguished by features that the world has never yet witnessed. Her language, her institutions, and her distinctive opinions are spread wherever enterprise has penetrated. Colonization, under her reign, has been fruitful and prosperous beyond a parallel. Mighty nations are rising around her, as generations succeed generations in the more familiar descent of families. Wisdom might prescribe a course which would have secured a devoted friend in every dependant as it was released from the dominion of the parent. How far that course has been pursued in respect to us, the past and the present time sufficiently show. Why is Russia already occupying that place in American politics which England should have nobly filled? Why did America choose England for her foe, when equal cause of war was given by France, and when the former was certainly most able to do her harm? These are questions easily answered by any man conversant with the state of the public mind in our nation; but I shall leave you to make your own observations.

"I have treated this matter gravely; for to me it always seems a subject fraught with the gravest consequences. The day is not far distant when the conflicting interests of the two nations shall receive support from equal power. Whether the struggle is to be maintained by the ordinary rivalry of enterprise and industry, or by the fiercer conflict of arms, depends greatly on the temper of America. To us the question is purely one of time. The result may be retarded; but he is deplorably ignorant of our character, of our resources, and of our high intentions, who believes it can ever be averted. That Almighty Being who holds the destinies of nations in his hands, must change the ordinary direction of his own great laws, or the American population will stand at the

head of civilized nations, long ere the close of this century. It is natural that they who falsely identify individual happiness with national power, should rack their ingenuity in quest of arguments that may refute omens that seem so unpropitious. The most common, because, in truth, the only plausible anticipation is, that our confederation will dissolve. It is remarkable that England, with her party-coloured empire, Austria, Prussia, Belgium, Sweden, and even our constant friend the Russ, should shut their eyes to the fragments of nations that compose their several powers, and complacently predict, that we, a people of common origin, of common opinions, of identified interests, and of perfectly equal rights, should alone be subject to the influence of an unnatural desire to separate. The people of France itself are not so thoroughly amalgamated as the people of the United States. The divisions of Catholics and Protestants alone, kept alive as they are throughout most of Europe, are a greater source of hostile feeling than all our causes of difference united. The fact is, that you are accustomed to consider the strong arm as the only bond of political union; and Europe has not yet had an opportunity of learning that the most durable government is that which makes it the interest of every citizen to yield it cheerful support. I defy the experience of the world to bring a parallel case of submission to established government, equal to that manifested by the people of the United States, to their own restrictive laws—measures of doubtful policy, and of nearly fatal effects, not to individuals alone, but to whole communities—and to communities too, that possessed all the organized means of separate governments completely within the reach of their hands. That which constitutes our weakness in European eyes, we know to constitute our unconquerable strength. The bayonets of England could not subdue us, an infant, impoverished, scattered, and peaceful people; but could she have yielded a moiety of the rights we now enjoy, we might have been persuaded, for a time longer, that our interests tied us to a nation in the other hemisphere. And, after all, admitting that we shall separate, the case, with respect to England, will not be greatly altered. Instead of having one mighty rival in industry and enterprise, she will have two. The issue will be protracted, but not averted. The main question is, whether that rivalry shall consist in manful, honourable, and amicable efforts, or in bitter, vindictive, heartless warfare. Every good man will wish the former, but every wise man must see how great is the danger of the latter. More than ordinary prudence is necessary to temper a struggle between nations, which, by

speaking a common language, so thoroughly understand each other's taunts and revilings. I do not pretend to say that the American, under a consciousness of similar innovations on his pride and his privileges, would be either more wise or more generous, than the Englishman has proved: but I do say, that it behoves the discreet and moderate of both nations to take heed, lest the growing dislike should degenerate into a feeling that may prove discreditable to human nature. There is, however, much mawkish philanthropy uttered on this subject. For my own part, I believe the fault of America has been that of a too cautious forbearance. Had we earlier spoken in the open and manly tone that becomes us, much of the miserable recrimination that I fear is in store would have been avoided. Still, we begin to feel, that while England has nearly exhausted her darts, our own quiver is full. She forgets that, when we achieved our independence we conquered an equal right to the language; and she ought not to be surprised if we should sometimes descend to adopt her own mode of using it. No doubt vulgar and impotent minds have already commenced the pitiful task of recrimination: nor can it be denied that men of even higher stamp have been provoked to a forgetfulness of their self-respect, by the unceasing taunts and revilings of our unwearied abusers; but if the latter think that they have yet felt the force of our retorts, they have only to continue in their career to be soon convinced of their error. If England believes she is not obnoxious to the attacks of sarcasm, it is not the least of her mistakes; and nothing but occasion is needed to convince her that no one can apply it, in her case, with half the malignant power of those very people she affects to despise.

"At present, the feeling in America, in respect to England, is rather that of indifference, than of dislike. We certainly do not worship her government; if we had, we should probably have adopted it; but we are far from being so unreasonable as to require that she should like our own. I know no people that trouble themselves less about the political concerns of other nations than my countrymen. It may be vanity, but they think they have little to learn, in this particular, except of themselves. There is, notwithstanding, one great and saving quality, which, if we are wrong, should plead something in extenuation of our self-delusion; we are neither ashamed nor afraid to change.

"When an Englishman tells us of our common descent, of the ideal homage we should both pay to the land and institutions of our ancestors, he is heard with cold and incredulous ears; we are no worshippers of stocks and stones. A

little extension of his principle would carry us into the ages of monkish misrule, or leave us in the plains of Saxony. But when an Englishman speaks to us of those moderated and chastened principles which characterize our religion, and refers to that mighty Spirit which inculcates the obligations of universal charity, he approaches by an avenue that is open to all, and which I pray God may never be closed against him, or any other of the children of men.

"As to the generation that must pass away before our strength shall entirely equal that of our great relative, there is little cause for apprehension. England has already done and said her worst. We dread her power as a veteran dreads the whizzing of bullets; he knows the deadly messengers may do him harm, but the sound is far too familiar to excite alarm. Let those who believe England more powerful now than she was fifty years since, ask themselves whether she can repeat her efforts?—let those who wish to think of America in 1824, as they did in 1776, approach like yourself, and make their own observations.

"I should describe the difference between the treatment which the American receives in England, and that which the Englishman receives in America, as being very marked. Notwithstanding all that has passed, we admit the Englishman freely and cordially into our houses, and I think we treat him, even now, rather as a distant relative than as an alien. There is so much natural interest in the feeling which induces us to listen curiously to accounts of the country of our fathers, that it may still require time to lose it altogether. Almost every English traveller in America (who has published) admits the cordiality and kindness of his reception. Though this acknowledgment is commonly made with some such flourish as—'we found the name of Englishman a general passport,' it is not the less an acknowledgment of the fact. What is the other side of the picture? Remember that I do not speak of exceptions, but of rules; not of men whom good fortune, or merit, or caprice, or fashion, or curiosity, or any other cause, has made the objects of attention; nor of those whose goodness of heart, and laudable desire to study character as it is exhibited in nations as well as in individuals, excite to kindness; but of those of my countrymen who travel as a body, and of those Englishmen who ordinarily receive them as guests in their own island.

"In the first place, an American has evidently to overcome a dislike to be received at all. This circumstance is betrayed to us in a thousand ways. The first and most common is an evident desire to avoid us. It is betrayed to us by foreigners,

who tell us distinctly of the fact; and it is betrayed to us by the very manner in which their civilities are offered when circumstances induce them to depart a little from their customary reserve.

"The reception of an American in England is not without amusement. I shall say nothing of the honest, blustering hospitality of that class in whom prejudice cannot always repress kindness, (especially if profit be in view;) but my remarks are now made on a class who have no direct gain before their eyes. These good folk are prodigious patronizers. Nothing makes them so happy as to get an American, and to show him that they are not above treating him as an equal; and in order that the poor foreigner should have no excuse for denying the condescension, they neglect no opportunity of exhibiting it. These people are every moment giving you solemn assurances that they are above the vulgar prejudices of the rest of the world, and perhaps you are gravely told that the party despises the theory which says physical nature is not so perfect in America as in Europe, by an individual who is gravely looking up in your face at an angle of forty-five degrees. One of the best-bred, natural, and easy women that I met in London was a countrywoman of my own. A very cosmopolite took occasion to compliment me on the subject; but, probably fearing he had said too much, he concluded by telling me that 'she had been *caught* young!' On another occasion I was assured, in the presence of twenty people, that a countryman of my own 'could not have been a finer gentleman than he was had he been educated in London or Paris!' An American lady was dancing in the midst of fifty Englishwomen, and her performance was so creditable, that I was led to believe by a by-stander, that he saw no difference in her grace and that of the belles of his own island! I should be ungrateful indeed, not to acknowledge the polished liberality of such concessions, which, I candidly assure you, exceeds any thing in the same way I ever heard in my own country. But these are cases to be laughed at: I am sorry to say that others occur, in which indignation destroys the spirit of merriment.

"Now, all this is exceedingly absurd and very pitiful. Heaven knows that every rational American is willing enough to admit what time, and money, and learning have done for Europe; nor do I think, unless provoked by superciliousness, that we are too apt to remind her possessors of what they have not done. But it is lamentable that the truly high breeding and excellent sense of those who do possess these qualities in an eminent degree, in England, cannot look down

the overweening character of so many of the nation. That they do not, my own experience, and the observations of every intelligent man, will show. I do not say, that if we were the old, and proud, and successful people, that we should discover better taste, deeper humility, or more candour; but this I do know, that being the people we are, we are not likely to submit quietly to the exhibition of an unearned superiority in others. These things must be changed, or the growth of the feeling to which I have already alluded appears to me to be inevitable. Hundreds of American travellers are in Europe at this hour. Each year increases the number, as it increases their influence on the tone of the public mind at home. Perhaps nine out of ten, place their feet on the land of their ancestors with a feeling in its favour; and I am firmly persuaded, that, from the causes I have named, nine out of ten leave it with satisfaction, and return to it with reluctance. The same individuals quit France, Italy, Russia, Switzerland and Germany, with kind and friendly recollections. England and the United States are placed in situations to make them respectful competitors, or downright haters. Love does not more infallibly beget love, than dislike creates dislike. I honestly think we are, as yet, substantially the defendants in this war of inuendos. We have certainly returned abuse for abuse, and as coarsely and as vulgarly, and frequently as ignorantly, as it has been bestowed; but there is nothing in our resentment which wears the aspect of settled and calculating hostility. I think our people have been wrong: they have often met calumny with deprecation, when they would have better shut its mouth by exhibiting spirit. We never got any thing from England in the way of petition or remonstrance; but we have obtained a glorious empire by resolution. I am no advocate for vindictive and vulgar recrimination; but I think the nation or the individual who would maintain his proper position, must take justice and self-respect for his guides, and care as little as possible for others.

"It would be as disgusting as it is unprofitable, to descend into the paltry details of the manner in which prejudices and contempt are fostered in England against America. Some itinerant hears a gross expression from the lips of a vulgar man in New-York, or a horrid oath in the mouth of some blasphemous boatman on the Mississippi, and they are instantly transferred to the pages of works like the Quarterly, and half a dozen others similar to it, as specimens of American manners! Do those who preside over the publications in question, believe that the art of objurgation is unknown

in their own country? I can tell them from close observation, that sentences are daily and hourly uttered in London itself, which, though they may want, and commonly do want, the miserable ingenuity of those they quote, fail in none of the blasphemy. '*Pretty considerable,*' is always dignified with italics; and the President of the United States is lucky if it be not interpolated into his annual message; but it may appear, as it does appear, in page 64, lines 6 and 7, of the famous Reflections on the French Revolution, by the Right Hon. Edmund Burke, in Roman insignificance!

"It behoves the wise, and the principled, and the good of the two nations, to put a stop to feelings which can so easily give rise to all that is disagreeable. But truckling is not wisdom in us, nor is condescension politeness in them. We must meet at all times, and in all places, as equals: not in concessions, that are wrung by policy, or perhaps by a still less worthy motive; but as mortals, who have but one nature and one God. Until this shall be done, and not till then, it is vain to expect the least revival of the feeling that might arise from a common parentage and common principles. I have reason to think that I do not stand alone, in this opinion, by millions. The time is near, I had almost written frightfully near, when two nations, who thoroughly understand each other's vituperations, shall support a delicate rivalry by equal power. That crisis is to be passed ere the danger of the malady shall abate. For one, I can say, in all sincerity, that I hope it may be done in peace; but I should be blind to the effect of natural causes, did I not see that it is a period attended with alarm. It is a thousand pities that the goodness of heart, and the secret sympathies which bind the lovers of humanity together, should be smothered by the grosser and more active passions of the world; but nature and self-preservation point to only one course when the appeal is seriously made to the patriot. It is by this unfortunate supremacy of the coarser passions of life, that the best men eventually get enthralled in the mental tyranny of prejudice and hostility.

"You will perceive by what is here written, that words and empty profession pass but for little in my poor estimate of liberality. If I know myself, an Englishman is regarded as any other man. When I find him, as I am happy to say I have found hundreds, benevolent, kind of heart, and liberally enlightened, he even draws nearer to my sympathies than any other foreigner; but the instant any of the qualities mentioned above, are discovered, distrust, coldness, and, not unfrequently, unconquerable disgust, succeed. There is no

other object in mentioning my own instance, except as it goes to prove what is the feeling of an individual who has never been the subject of any peculiar causes to make his case different from that of the mass of his nation. I believe it is the state of mind of a vast majority of that portion of my countrymen who are brought much in collision with the natives of Great Britain. But these sympathies may be blighted too often. It is vain to say, that the mass of mankind are ignorant, and prejudiced, and obstinate, while you cannot add that they are impotent. Men act and feel, they war and they destroy, in masses; and it is as bodies, and not in their insulated exceptions, that they must be viewed.

"But I deny that the prejudice of England against America is limited to the ignorant, though I am willing to admit, and admit it I do with unaffected pleasure, that there are many and manly exceptions. Still, a deep, settled, ignorant, and, I think, an increasing hostility, to the people, the institutions, and, I fear, to the hopes of the United States, exists in the minds of a vast majority of the middling classes. I use the term middling in an intellectual, no less than in its ordinary, acceptation. It is not a month since a friend of mine accidentally met a clergyman's daughter, of good manners, of a naturally kind heart, and of great general good sense, who manifested this temper in an extraordinary degree. Chance introduced the subject of America, and it is scarcely possible to describe the quality of her abuse, which knew no other bounds than what propriety of sex, and some little respect for condition, would impose. On inquiry, it appeared that this lady (for she was not at all unworthy of the appellation) had never known an American in her life! She had listened too eagerly to misrepresentation and caricature; and, perhaps, her very intelligence added to her spleen, by giving the alarm to her patriotism. But the progress of a great nation is not to be stopped by angry words.

"You may be inclined to ask if the American is not often guilty of the same weakness? No doubt he is—though always with this marked difference: he disputes, and often denies the claims of England, in this or that particular; he is disgusted with certain usages, and does not scruple to say so; he laughs at the self-delusion of her poets and dramatists; but he does not deny her general right to be considered among the greatest nations of the earth. While he sees and acknowledges, and has often felt the equality of her courage, and morals, and enterprise, he confesses no superiority, because, in simple truth, it has no existence. I do not ever remember to have heard one of my countrymen, however ignorant or

vulgar, refuse to admit an Englishman to most of the merit of being a sufficiently civilized man; but it would be quite easy to produce printed evidence, in works of character, to show that there is no reciprocity in even this doubtful degree of liberality.

"I shall close this long, and, I fear, tiresome note, by writing still more frankly. I have heard a great deal of professions of amity and kindness towards America, during my recent visit to England. I feel that no man has a right to distrust declarations that come from fearless and honest natures. For my own part, I give credit to the sincerity of the individuals who have made them. But when these declarations come, as they so often do come, openly and in print, accompanied by sneers, and misrepresentations, and caricatures, it would exceed the ordinary bounds of human vanity to yield them faith. In order that no misconception may exist on this head, I beg leave to direct your attention to the Quarterly Review, a publication which, erroneously or not, is said to enjoy a particular degree of the favour of those who control the policy of England. Will any honest or candid man say, that the spirit and language of this journal are conciliatory? If the English nation wish to cherish an amicable temper with America, this is not the way to effect their object. One is often at a loss to arrive at the spirit which dictates these mongrel essays. Are their writers so ignorant of human nature, as not to know, that while one taunt will be remembered, a thousand qualifying commendations will be forgotten? If they are written for the English nation, do they not prove the existence of the temper I have described? and if they are written for the American, is it believed that we shall take our political creed from known rivals? If peace between England and America be an object—and God knows, I consider it an object of deep and momentous concern—it is not to be preserved by means like these. There is one question alone, which must always endanger the harmony of the two nations. I mean the question of impressment. So long as this delicate and important point remains at issue, England cannot war with any other power without creating a fearful risk of drawing America into the controversy. There exists no longer in the United States, a blind and infatuated party to uphold a foreign people in the support of a doctrine that is as untenable by common sense, as it is insulting to the sovereignty of an independent nation, and this is a question, therefore, that can only be disposed of by great conciliation and mutual forbearance. But, admitting that the administration of the

United States should be disposed to cede a little, for a time, to policy, until our sinews shall be still better strung, Heaven be praised, the American administration can do nothing against the feeling and declared will of the American nation. Kind words cost but little. He who does not choose to use them, cannot expect to have his joke and keep his friend. It may be very pleasant to laugh at the honest and sincere anticipations of a people whose hopes have never yet been deceived; but it would be far wiser to consider what are called the boastful exaggerations of the Americans, as so many indications of the spirit with which the vast power they are so shortly and so inevitably to possess, will be wielded. People may not, and do not like to hear of these things; but I appeal to the candour of any honest man, if we tell them as often, as plainly, and as forcibly as provocation and superciliousness would justify; nay more, I do not think we tell them ourselves as often as they are betrayed by the jealousy of others. We live in the quiet of a reasonable, and, I hope, of a grateful security. There is one feature in the intercourse between all Europeans and Americans that should never be forgotten. The former proceed on the assumption of premises which were once true, are now false, and will shortly be absurd; and they talk on quietly, with an air of superiority, of which, half the time, they are unconscious themselves—while the American is thought an arrogant innovator, if he pretend even to equality.

"Turning from this picture of irritating and jealous contention, one scarcely knows where to seek the antidote to the poison which is thus insidiously infused into the two nations. It can only be found in the high principles and good sense of the religiously disposed, and of the enlightened. The former class may endure and deprecate, for their office is meek and holy charity; but it may be well questioned, if the knowledge of man and worldly wisdom do not tell the intelligent American, that his nation has already forborne too long. When are we to expect the termination of these constant appeals to our forbearance, or when are we to look with confidence to the hour in which misrepresentation and calumny shall cease? I refer you to the VII. Number of the Quarterly Thelogical Review and Ecclesiastical Record, a work devoted to the promulgation of *Christian* doctrines, as a striking evidence of the temper which pervades so much of England on the subject of America. It is vain to say, that the sermon it affects to review is any justification of the language it contains There is nothing in that sermon but what a minister of God had a perfect right to tell his people. But it seems

our Bishop is accused of having left an erroneous opinion of his sentiments behind him in England. I hope his successors will profit by the hint, and deal a little more frankly, though it should be done at some expense of politeness. If any thing can serve to make the sweeping and ridiculous charges of this review more absurd, it is the well-known fact, that millions in Great Britain pine to enjoy the distant advantages of the very regions the writer affects to undervalue. It is no small refutation of a large portion of the calumny heaped upon us, that no work, pretending to a religious character, could publish such gross exaggerations of any other people, in America, without meeting its punishment in the powerful rebuke of a community that knows well how to distinguish between the professions and the duties of Christianity.

"But I have no wish to pursue the ungrateful subject further. If we do not recriminate and assail, it is not for want of means, but for want of inclination. All of our travellers in England have as yet been Hodgsons (at least in temper;) and it is worthy of remark, that while so many English have been journeying in America, to ridicule, to caricature, and to misrepresent, not a single American of the thousands who daily visit and have visited England, has, to my knowledge, ever undertaken the office of retaliation. I shall not offend your good sense, by pretending you do not know how easy the task would become, to an American who had the disposition and the talents for its—I had almost written *duty*.

"I have treated this matter more gravely than the security and indifference of most Americans would induce them to believe necessary. But to me there seems a danger in the subject that my countrymen, who now openly laugh at these 'paper bullets,' do not always see. It is plain to me, that immense numbers in England have a secret presentiment that there is great danger of a war between the two countries. I take the often repeated disclaimers of a wish for hostilities to be a bad omen. No man in America, thinks at all on the subject. I do affirm that I have heard more said about war in the last four weeks in England, than in the last four years that I passed at home. I think one can trace easily the cause of this difference of feeling. We are passive, for we have neither distrust nor jealousy. We know we are moving steadily to our object, and we think or care little about what other people wish or contemplate. I do not believe that two grave and thinking nations will ever enter into hostilities on account of pasquinades; but pasquinades can produce a state of feeling that may render it difficult to overcome serious obstacles to peace. That these obstacles have

arisen, and that they will constantly continue to arise, good men may lament, but prudent men must foresee.

"Having very probably wearied you, my dear ———, with a subject in which you may not feel as interested as myself, you have a right to some advice concerning those preliminary investigations on which you are so meritoriously inclined. I scarcely know a book to which I can refer you. Most of the travels are next to worthless. Even statistical works are liable to so much explanation, in a country where changes are so rapid, that they are apt to mislead. For this simple reason, no book, for a long time to come, can be deemed a standard work. It is found difficult, with the utmost industry, for even the geographies to maintain their places in the schools. What is true to-day, may, where so much activity prevails, become erroneous to-morrow. It is a common saying, that an American who remains five years abroad, gets behind his country. There are many and lamentable proofs of its justice. It would have been just as safe for the Austrians to believe Napoleon at Turin this week, because he was at Milan the last, as it would be exact to calculate that America is the same the present as she was found the preceding year. A population that, in our infancy, amounted to three millions, has already swelled to twelve, and thousands are now in being who will live to see it fifty! All other changes have kept equal pace with the unprecedented and nearly incredible growth of our numbers.

"You will find, in the British Annual Register, a sufficiently correct history of the war of the revolution. It is often coloured in matters that may touch the national pride; but is written with far too much talent to be vulgarly illiberal. Many of the private memoirs of that period, English, French, and American, have merit as well as interest for those who are disposed to seek it on so trite a subject: but Marshall, with all his faults of arrangement, for candour, manliness, and judicious weighing of testimony, is a model for all histories. His opportunities, too, for obtaining the truth have probably never been equalled by any other historian. For books of a later date, I scarcely know where to refer you. The little episode of Anquetil on the American war, is wonderfully erroneous. He confounds names, dates, and events, in a manner that is inexplicable. He is not alone in saying that the *mistress of Washington had betrayed his secrets!* Nothing can be more absurd than to suppose *any woman* had the power of betraying the secrets of one so wise, unless it be to suppose that *woman* was his *mistress*. A more profound ignorance of the man, or of the people by whom he was in-

trusted, cannot easily be imagined. After all, you have chosen the only course by which a tolerably correct idea of America can be obtained. You will labour under one disadvantage, however, of which it is impossible to get rid in years. An European can scarcely spare sufficient time to acquire the simplicity of habits, may I also say, simplicity of thought, necessary to estimate our country. There is no people of whom a superficial knowledge is so soon gained, for they are communicative and without suspicion; but long familiarity is required to judge of a nation so eminently practical, and so universally influenced by common sense. Of one thing you may be assured, that nothing I can bestow shall be wanting to make your visit both pleasant and profitable. And now, my dear ———," &c. &c.

NOTE B.—*Page* 16.

"WHAT effect did the general hostilities of Europe, from 1792 to 1814, produce on the maritime spirit or on the navigation of your country; and what was the counteracting influence of the retaliating measures of the belligerents, of your own restrictive laws, and of the war of 1812?"

"As to maritime spirit, I should answer, none. The American has ever shown an inclination to the sea, and perhaps there is no branch of his industry and profit that he would abandon with greater reluctance. You will find the proofs of this disposition in history, in his professional skill, in the restless enterprise of the national character, and in the sagacity of the people, which is not likely to admit of their being cajoled into an impression that they do not comprehend their own interests. The long neutrality of the Americans certainly added to the wealth of the nation, and enabled its merchants to increase their tonnage to a comparatively enormous amount. In 1810, when the population of the country but a little exceeded 7,000,000, there were more than 1,400,000 tons of shipping under the American flag. After allowing for errors and frauds, both of which existed at that period to some extent, this was making one ton to every five souls. To equal this ratio, Great Britain should possess a tonnage of near five millions, and France one of six, and that without computing the inhabitants of their dependencies. But, great as was the effect of this neutral character on America, it was by no means equal to that which would have been produced by her natural advantages to profit by such a

position, had not the contest been marked by a singular disregard of the established usages of the world. The "orders in council" of the English, and the "decrees" of the French are not unknown to you. Under the operations of those novel principles of belligerent rights, more than sixteen hundred sail of American vessels were captured or sequestered by the English, French, Spaniards, Danes, and Neapolitans. Of this number, near a thousand were condemned, and, with their cargoes, entirely lost to the nation. These captures occurred during the *enjoyment* of our neutral character! The restrictive laws, a measure of our own forbearing policy, followed these heavy losses, and, for near two years, the foreign trade of the country was entirely abandoned. To these again succeeded a war of near three years, with a nation which commanded the sea, which had little else to do on that element but to annoy our trade, and which, for much of the time, had no other enemy. To all these checks, which, in 1814, had reduced the navigation of the country to about one-twentieth of what it had been seven years before, succeeded the general peace, a period when each community returned to the enjoyment of its own peculiar advantages. If we put the short and nominal interruption to the peace, that was occasioned by the return of Napoleon, as a set-off to the additional year that the American war continued, we can suppose all the nations to have re-entered the lists of commercial enterprise together. The result is known to you. Though America has not regained her former ratio of tonnage, (a thing not to be expected during a general peace,) she has become again, compared with her population, the most maritime nation of the earth. When one coolly reflects on the shocks she sustained in her wealth, the long continuance of the restrictions she endured, and her infancy, the impression must be irresistible that there exists, either in the spirit of her people, or in the resources of America, or in both, an operating cause to produce these effects, which is to be found nowhere else. Does any man believe that there is a single nation in Europe that could have recovered so soon from similar shocks? The restoration of the convalescent child to its pristine powers, is not more strongly contrasted to the laboured and feeble efforts of age, than is the elasticity with which America recovers from political pressure to be compared to the cumbered efforts of the older and more artificial communities of Europe."

"What effect is the continuance of peace likely to produce on the navigation of your country?"

"Peace will of course change, indeed it has already, in

some measure, changed the *direction* of our commerce. We are now placed, as regards mere privilege, on a level with other nations. That we are more than equal to maintain the competition, wherever trade is conducted on principles of reciprocity, is manifest by the fact that we conduct so large a proportion of the intercourse between ourselves and the rest of the world. The main result is already to be seen in existing facts; though it is undeniably in the power of other countries to throw embarrassments in our way, just as it is in our power to adopt measures of retaliation. It is useless to carry this investigation into details, since the minute policy of nations to-day may differ so much from that of to-morrow. It appears to me that the question of the increase of our navigation is altogether one of degree. That it must continue to increase is just as capable of demonstration as the facts that it has increased, and does increase, are notorious. Let us look, for instance, at a branch of the trade that is almost without exception within our own control. On examination it will be seen, that while the foreign commerce of the United States has vacillated with the changes of external causes, the trade coastwise has been regularly, and, I might add, naturally, on the increase. In America, the vessels which are employed in the intercourse between one State and another, or, in fact, between one port and another, are enumerated in a different class from those which sail for ports without the country. The former are known as registered, and the latter as licensed vessels. The difference in name is owing to the difference in the document which gives to each its respective character. In all other respects the employments are the same. When the destination of the vessel is changed, it becomes necessary to change the evidence of character. Now, in 1790, the licensed tonnage of the country amounted to 103,775 tons. It exceeds, at the present hour, this amount by seven-fold. The increase has been remarkably regular, and is always in a ratio rather exceeding that of the population of the country.*

"The most rational way of anticipating the future state of our commerce by the past, is to consider the ratio of the increasing wants of the country in connexion with the effects which repletion, if I may so term it, never fails to produce on the moral no less than on the physical system. So long as the animal is in a state of growth, ample sustenance tends to aid that growth, by keeping the frame equal to its

* The reports of 1826, raise the tonnage of the United States to 1,534,000 tons, of which more than 800,000 are in the coasting trade and fisheries.

utmost powers of developement; but as maturity approaches excessive nourishment gradually begins to defeat its own object. There are also points in the developement of the resources of all communities, where calculation must become subject to the re-actions of a state of rest, and of a retrogradation, just as in the animal system allowances were to be made for a condition of infant vigour. Should we assume, for a rule, the past ratio of the increase of our coasting trade, and with the exception of the last few years, it has hitherto been exceedingly regular, we shall have, multiplying the present amount by seven, a total of near five millions for the licensed tonnage of the country in the year 1860. Under a general impression of its improbability, the mind rejects this enormous amount as exaggerated, and, no doubt, with some reason. If we take the positive growth of the past without any reference to its comparative rate of increase, it will require another thirty years to add another 600,000 tons to this branch of our trade. But as the United States are still in the course of a vigorous and healthful developement of their resources, there are those who would reject the principle of this manner of estimation, however they might be satisfied with its result. If we take the known rate of the increase of our population as a guide, we shall have a licensed tonnage of about 1,500,000 in the year 1850. With these facts in view, you are nearly or quite as well qualified to judge of this matter as myself, though all conjecture on the subject must necessarily be made under a sense of the mutability of human affairs. In order to form an opinion of this branch of trade, however, and of its effects on the maritime character of the nation, you will remember that the voyages are made in vessels of from ten tons, to those of five hundred, and that they are from twenty miles in extent to two thousand. Now, this trade is all our own, and can never be materially invaded, during peace, by the policy of any other people. It is in itself such a germ of nautical power as exists nowhere else, unless it may be in England, where it exists at all times subject to the dangers of colonial discussions and conflicting interests. In short, it is such a healthful, safe, and increasing source of commerce, as, I think, can never be long equalled by the intercourse between principal and dependant."

"What effect will manufactures be likely to produce on the maritime character of your people? How far will the cheapness of land have a tendency to divert your population from the ocean, and what will be the probable influence of the inland States in opposing the commercial, or navigating interests of the maritime?"

"These are questions often asked; but the two first of them, at least, might be answered by the results of all experience. Men navigate ships for precisely the same object that they manufacture goods. They do both to enrich themselves, or to prevent want. It is a good reason why the islander should go to sea, that he can do nothing better; but it is just as good a one, that the inhabitant of a continent should do the same thing, because he can do nothing else half so profitable. Men can be led as well as driven. Now, the American long ago made the discovery that, notwithstanding the high price of labour in his country, as he can sail a ship cheaper than others, he is likely to reap most emolument in turning his attention to the sea. In consequence of this discovery, the nation has become maritime; and it will undeniably continue maritime so long as there is profit to be derived from navigation. Land was cheaper thirty years ago than to-day, and yet our citizens left it to earn their money on the water. The ship-master who gains three or four hundred dollars a year on his farm, rents it, and goes to sea to earn a thousand, and the labourer prefers twelve dollars a month to eight. The very cheapness of land, by lessening the value of its products, assists to create this state of things. As the population increases, the relative prices of labour will necessarily diminish, until the time shall come when men will go to sea in America, as elsewhere, because they can do nothing else. There is, however, another cause which must never be lost sight of, when one reasons on the inducements which tempt men to quit the land for the water. I mean the restlessness of moral excitement. This cause is more active in America, where the labouring classes read more, and hear more of adventure than any where else. It is true, that possibly one-third of the common seamen employed in the foreign trade of America are foreigners; this fact is not, however, owing to any indisposition to the sea on the part of the natives, but to the superabundance of the supply in Europe, and the higher inducements which the American ship-owner is able to offer for labour. Nearly, or perhaps quite, in the proportion, however, as strangers come to us, do our own people go abroad. The American sailor is to be found all over the world, and wherever he is known, he is liked for his cleverness, and generally for his comparatively quiet habits. There is no political truth more certain in America, than that all demands will meet with their supply. To those who are familiar with the subject, it is often a matter of surprise to witness how infallibly, and how soon an extraordinary demand for labour produces a glut in a country where every

thing is more abundant than man. It is not unusual for artisans or day-labourers to be informed of these demands, by means of the public prints, and for adventurers to be seen undertaking journeys of hundreds of miles, not to provide against want, but in order to reap the utmost possible emolument from their personal efforts. In this particular, no parallel can be drawn between America and any other country, since no other country possesses such varied and cheap means of intelligence and communication, nor a population sufficiently active and intelligent to profit by them. As respects enterprise and intelligence, the mass of our labouring people may be placed on a level with the better instructed English mechanic: without his particular excellence, it is true, but with infinitely more general and useful information. Men would come from the forest to the sea to meet a demand, just as men will go from the sea to the interior, when that demand has more than met with its supply. So long as the merchant can afford to pay for labour, he will never want seamen in America, since it is commerce that makes mariners, and not mariners commerce. There are certain familiar facts that have a more particular connexion with the present state of our seamen, which we may find it useful to refer to, when we shall come to consider America as a naval power. But the subject must be postponed, until you have seen something of the country itself.

"As respects the supposed difference between the interests of what you call the maritime, and of the interior States, it has no real existence, and can, therefore, never produce any important results. It is difficult to imagine a state of society where there is so little competition, (the source of all discord,) between its members, as is to be found in the United States. The unfortunate and lamentable grievance of slavery ceases to be an evil in this respect. That momentary collisions of opinion do arise between northern and southern, between eastern and western policy, is undeniable; but they are far more the results of the right to complain, than of any natural disability to maintain the connexion. Fancy for a moment, that Ireland, Scotland, Canada, and the West Indies, could make themselves, not heard, but felt in the councils of their empire, and then figure to yourself the discord that would follow! Nay, look at that which does at this moment exist, when their voices are so feeble, and their efforts so impotent. Now, in America, the southern planter has need of the shipping and manufactures of some one. He has only to ask himself whether he will use those of a people in whose councils he shares, or those of strangers.

The converse of the proposition exhibits the principle which binds the northern to the southern man. On all the great and leading questions of policy, their interests are identified, and the harmony which has suffered so little interruption for half a century, shows how sensible they are of its truth. Any departures from this accordance of opinion, are merely trifling exceptions, which are only the more prominent from their infrequency. If the States of Ohio, Tennessee, and Kentucky, had the exclusive power to legislate on the commerce of the Union, they might encumber it from ignorance of its practices, though they would not be slow to perceive how useful it is, even to themselves. But commerce is regulated in the grand council of the nation, where men are assembled who know how to compare their respective wants, and where small sectional interests are completely silenced by the voices of the majority. But after all, in considering this question, a great deal too much stress is laid on the *inland States* of America. The territorial limits of the States are ideal, so far as commerce is concerned. As bodies politic, the States are totally mute in the matter. Neither is extent of coast any evidence of the maritime habits of a State. New-York, with more shipping, has less coast (if an island without ports be excepted,) than the two smallest States of the Union. Out of twenty-four States, seventeen touch the sea, five lie on the great lakes, and the remaining three have direct navigable water communication with the port of New-Orleans, and will shortly have an internal water communication with that of New-York.

"As to manufactures, they are clearly a means of aiding commerce, when they exist in communities that can profit by both. It will be adding one more to the other numerous nautical resources of the country, let them thrive with us to-day, or fifty years hence, since, putting exportation out of the question, they will clearly increase the objects of intercommunication.

"I know of but one other manner of considering the matter that is embraced by your query. It does not, in truth, properly belong to the subject, though, as it is always forced into view in Europe, I presume you may expect me to say something concerning it, here. I mean the extent to which emigration will affect navigation, by depriving the maritime States of their seamen. I have already said, that should there be a demand for seamen, it would produce, when necessary, a counter-current. But it never can be necessary. Of this truth you will be convinced by a simple statement of facts. Though, perhaps, one-third, and sometimes one-

half of the seamen employed in our *foreign* trade may be foreigners, the country has always possessed enough of its own to conduct its commerce. Thousands live on shore for years at a time, and thousands are induced to go abroad in quest of adventure. In the trade, coastwise, fisheries, &c. &c. nine-tenths, or, perhaps, more are natives. Now these men have been chiefly supplied by five of the New-England, and the five middle States. In 1790, the population of these ten States amounted to 2,264,536. In 1820, it had reached 4,603,974; that is to say, it had doubled in thirty years, notwithstanding the vast emigration they had sent to the west. This increase is certainly liable to some explanation. During this time, New-York, Pennsylvania, Maine, and New-Hampshire, have been, comparatively speaking, new States. But the two latter have never been favourites, and all have, for the last fifteen years, sent forth more emigrants than they have received, and they have received few settlers that did not come from some one of the other six. The increase of these ten States between the years 1810 and 1820, a period during which they must have been losers by the emigration, was little short of 900,000 souls. Thus, you see, the question has become exceedingly narrow. If the fact, that we have now a sufficient number of native seamen, to conduct our trade, be admitted, the tonnage of the country must double in thirty years, or the increase of the population of these ten States alone can furnish the necessary supply for the future. In making these remarks, I have excluded foreign emigration from the estimates, since it is well known that it produces no visible effect on the population of the country. It has been judiciously calculated that, all births allowed, the population of the United States was scarcely augmented 200,000 souls, by foreign emigration, in five-and-thirty years. It is said to be increasing a little just now, a fact that will, of course, only facilitate our ability to meet any extraordinary demand for men."

TO THE COUNT JULES DE BÉTHIZY,

COLONEL EN RETRAITE OF THE IMPERIAL GUARD.

Washington, ———

I WRITE you from the little capital of this great republic. After lingering at Baltimore until reasons for all further delay were exhausted, we reluctantly turned our faces westward. Cadwallader had pointed out to me sundry busy-looking travellers, who were strolling through the streets of the town, with more gravity of mien (assumed or natural) than is common to meet in a city, and whispered in my ears that they were members of Congress, on their way to the seat of government. This was a hint not to be disregarded. Tearing ourselves from the attraction of bright eyes and soft voices, we gallantly entered a coach, and broke the chain of attraction which, like the fabled magnet of Mahomet's coffin, had so long kept me suspended between heaven and earth. Heigho! dear Jules, I confess to twenty-four hours, when a treacherous intention of resigning, to some less inexorable successor, the stall which I so unworthily fill in our self-denying chapter, was insidiously floating before my imagination. But a resolution which has borne me through so many similar dangers in triumph,

(aided by the members of Congress), was victorious. By-the-bye, I am grieved to the heart to hear of the sad accident that has befallen the professor, and most sincerely do I pray that the time may be long averted when it shall become necessary to supply a vacancy in our numbers, from a cause so fatal as a marriage. The grave might be wept over, and time would soften grief for the death of even a bosom friend, but what could time do towards mitigating a penance performed at the *confessional* of Hymen? The more sincere, and the more frequent the acknowledgments, the more keen and helpless would the bitterness of a spirit so thoroughly bruised become. If you pass through the queen of cities this winter, order a new cushion to my chair; I intend that the sittings of 1827 shall wear well into the mornings!

The road between Baltimore and Washington is neither particularly bad nor particularly good.* It passes through a comparatively barren, and a little inhabited country. It was here that I first observed the great difference between the aspect of the slave-holding and the non-slave-holding States. In Pennsylvania, at the distance of sixty miles north of our present route, we should have seen a landscape, over

* It may be well to state, once for all, the following facts concerning the American roads. In all the northern and eastern States, for nine months in the year, they are, as a rule, tolerably good in those parts of the country where the establishments are old enough to admit of it. In the spring, and in the autumn, there are periods when most of the roads are bad. There are many roads, however, as good as the ordinary turnpike roads of England, and which vary very little in quality throughout the year. A traveller in an American stage-coach cannot well compare the roads of the United States with those of England, for the coaches of the former are not suspended on springs, though the seats are sometimes supplied with them. As one quits the older parts of the country, the roads gradually grow worse, until, in the very newest settlements, they are often no more than trees that are marked, or *blazed*, to indicate the courses of the route.

which farm-houses, barns, and all the ordinary objects of a prosperous husbandry, were profusely sprinkled, while here the houses began to be distant from each other, or were grouped in little clusters apart from the highways. This portion of America bears a greater resemblance to continental Europe, than the States we have quitted. The dwelling of the planter is the château; and the huts of the slaves form the contiguous village. A difference in the moral condition of the ages in which the two have been constructed, has induced some very sensible alterations in the plans of the buildings; but, still the outline is the same.

I was surprised at the sterility and nakedness of the country through which we journeyed, though I was given to understand that a great deal of the State of Maryland is land of the richest quality. There were one or two small villages on the route, but which, after those we had seen further north, wore a miserable air. I am not certain, however, that they are not quite as good in every particular as the ordinary villages of Europe. Here I first saw fields for the tobacco plant. It grows in hills, not unlike the maize, and is rarely, or never, fenced, no animal but man having a relish for the unsavoury weed.

At the distance of six or seven miles from Washington, we stopped at the village of Bladensburgh, a place notorious for two circumstances. It lies just without the territory of the district of Columbia, and is the spot usually chosen for the decision of private combats; and it is the place where the affair between the English and the Americans was fought a few hours before the former entered the city.

I confess I had thought it surprising that so small a force (about 5000 men) could have taken possession of the capital of so powerful a nation; but a nearer view has entirely dissipated the wonder. It was a point where the Americans, having nothing of mil-

tary importance to defend, had assembled no force, and there is not probably on the whole line of their coast, a more deserted and tenantless region than the country traversed by the invaders. The troops rallied to resist the English, as their intention became known, were merely the citizens of the adjoining country, who assembled in a very imperfect state of preparation, and who were very little, if at all, superior in numbers to their antagonists. They had not even the ordinary inducements to risk their lives against those of hireling troops; for, even to this hour, it is difficult to find what object General Ross could have had in hazarding his army in an expedition that might have been attended with destruction. A man like Jackson to oppose him would have insured it.

I alighted at Bladensburgh, and, accompanied by my friend, walked in advance of the carriage over the ground, attended by a sufficiently intelligent man who had witnessed the whole affair. As it is a little in your way, the details I gleaned shall be rendered as an offering to your military *goût*. Should they fail of the interest which has so often been thrown over the entrances of Moscow and Paris, you know how to make allowances for an inferiority in dramatic effect, which is no more than a natural consequence of the difference between the conquest of a city of half a million of inhabitants, and of a town of eight or nine thousand.

The country around Bladensburgh is gently undulating and moderately wooded. A small stream lies near the village, and between it and the capital. It is crossed by a wooden bridge. So much hurry and indecision appear to have existed among the defenders, that even this bridge was not destroyed, though it might have been rendered impassable in ten minutes. It would seem, however, that many of their troops, such as they were, only reached the ground at the critical moment when they were wanted in

the combat. The dispositions for resistance were made along the crest of a gentle acclivity, at the distance of rather more than a mile from this bridge. The centre of their position was on the highway, and its defence was intrusted to a few seamen and two or three hundred marines, the only disciplined forces on the ground. A few light troops (all militia) were pushed in front to the banks of the stream, and two pieces of artillery were placed at a point to command the passage of the bridge. There was a little skirmishing here; and it seems, by the English accounts, that they suffered severely from the artillery in crossing the bridge. The ground in front of the seamen and marines was a gentle acclivity, and perfectly open. Here there was some sharp fighting. The British columns were obliged to open, and General Ross began to manœuvre. But the militia did not wait to be turned, for they retired to a man (the skirmishers excepted), without firing a gun. The seamen and marines stood well, and were necessarily brought off to prevent capture. The artillery was all, or nearly all, taken. This is, in substance, what is called the Battle of Bladensburgh. The American loss was trifling, less than two hundred, and that of the English perhaps three or four hundred.

It is easy to criticise the disposition of the American commander. This gentleman was an able lawyer of the adjoining State of Maryland, who had listened to the whisperings of that uneasy ambition which sometimes makes men heroes. He had quitted the gown for the sword a short time before, and probably knew as little about his new profession as you know of the one he had deserted. Lawyer or not, had this gentleman placed his fellow-citizens (for soldiers they cannot be called) in and about the Capitol, and had they only fought as well as they did, he taking care not to give them any particularly favourable opportunity of dispersing, I think General Ross

would have been spared the very equivocal glory of burning all that then existed of that edifice; viz. the two wings. He listened to other counsels.

As we approached the capital, we saw before us an extent of open country that did not appear to be used for any agricultural purposes. It lay, without fences, neglected, and waste. This appearance is common just here, and is owing to the circumstance that tobacco exhausts the soil so much, that, in a country where land and its products are still so cheap, it is not worth the cost of restoring it. We soon got a view of the dome of the Capitol, and the whole of the façade of that noble edifice came into view, as we mounted a slight eminence which had partly concealed it. As my eye first wandered eagerly around, at this point, to gather together the scattered particles of the city, I will take the present occasion to convey a general impression of its appearance.

The seat of government was removed from Philadelphia to this place, in order that it might be more central. So far as a line drawn north and south is in question, this object is sufficiently answered. But Washington stands so very far east of a central meridian as to render it probable that other considerations influenced the change. I have never heard it so said, but nothing is more probable than that the slave-holding States required some such concession to their physical inferiority. At all events, every body appears perfectly satisfied with the present position of the capital. Perhaps, notwithstanding the difference on the map, the place is practically nearer the centre than if it stood farther west. The member from Alabama, or Louisiana, or Missouri, arrives by sea, or by means of the great rivers of the west, with about the same expense of money and of labour as the member from Vermont, Maine, or New-Hampshire. Some one must always have the benefit of being nearest the political centre, and it is of no

great moment whether he be a Virginian or an Ohiese. As the capital is now placed, it is more convenient for quick communication with Europe than if farther inland, and it is certainly nearer the centre of interests where it stands, than it would be in almost any other spot in the confederation.

Had the plan of the city been as well conceived as its locality, there would be less ground of com plaint. The perspective of American character was certainly exhibited to great advantage in the conceptions of the individual who laid out the site of this town. It is scarcely possible to imagine a more unfortunate theory than the one he assumed for the occasion. He appears to have egregiously mistaken the relative connexion between streets and houses since it is fair to infer he would not have been so lavish of the one without the aid of the other, did he not believe the latter to be made use of as accessories to the former, instead of the reverse, as is every where else found to be the case. And, yet I think, both nature and art had united to point out the true plan for this city, as I shall endeavour to convince you without delay.

The ground occupied by the city of Washington, may be described as forming a tolerably regular triangle. Two of its sides are washed by the two branches of the Potomac, which diverge towards the north-east and north-west, while on its third, there are no limits to its extent, the land being a somewhat gentle acclivity, gradual on the whole, though undulating, and often broken in its minute parts. The river below the point is a noble stream, stretching for many miles to the southward, in full view of the town. Both of its branches are navigable for near a league. At the distance of about two miles from the point, the main river (west branch), which had hitherto washed a champaign country, enters a range of low mountains, and makes a still

more decided inclination to the west. Here is the head of tide and of navigation. The latter circumstance had early pointed out the place for the site of a town, and accordingly a little city grew on the spot, whence tobacco and lumber were shipped for other ports, long before the neighbourhood was thought of, as the capital of a great nation. This place is called Georgetown. It is rather well built than otherwise, and the heights, in its rear, for it lies against an acclivity, are not only beautiful in themselves, but they are occupied by many pretty villas. It contains in itself, perhaps 9000 inhabitants. It has a college and five churches, two of which are Episcopal.

Georgetown is divided, from what is termed Washington City, by a rapid little stream called Rock Creek.* The land, for a considerable distance after the creek is crossed, is well adapted for a town. It is sufficiently unequal to carry off the water, and yet sufficiently level for convenient streets. Here is the spot, I think, where the buildings should have been collected for the new city. But at the distance of about a mile and a quarter from the bridge, a vast square is laid out. On one of its sides is the President's House,† flanked by the public offices. A few houses and a church are on two more of its sides, though the one opposite to the 'White House' is as yet entirely naked. From this square, sundry great avenues diverge, as do others from another centre, distant a mile and a half still further east. The latter square is adorned by the Capitol. Across all

* The Americans often call a small river a creek, and brooks of a large size are oftener called creeks than any thing else. Schoharie Creek is as large as the Seine, at Paris. It is, to all intents, a rapid river; but the size of many of their rivers is so great as to produce a sort of impression that the smaller streams should be of a different class.

† The Americans familiarly call the exceedingly pretty little palace in which their chief magistrate resides, the "White House," but the true appellation is the President's House.

these avenues, which are parallel to nothing, there is a sort of net-work of streets, running at right angles with each other. Such is Washington on the map.

In point of fact, but few of the avenues or streets are opened, and fewer still are built on. There is one of the former running from the bridge at Georgetown to the first square, and another leads from the President's House to the capitol. There are two or three more which connect important points, though only the two named are sufficiently built on to have the least of the character of a town. There are rather more streets open, though not one of them all is absolutely built up from one end to the other.

In consequence of the gigantic scale on which Washington is planned, and the different interests which influence the population, its inhabitants (including Georgetown) are separated into four distinct little towns, distant from each other about a mile. Thus we have Georgetown in the west, containing 9000 souls; the town immediately around the President's House, (extending towards the Capitol,) with perhaps 10,000; that around the Capitol, of some two or three thousand souls; and the buildings at the Navy-Yard, which lies on the east branch, still a mile further. The whole *city*,* including its three divisions, with here and there a few scattered buildings, may now contain about 16,000 souls.

When the people of the United States determined to have a more central capital, it was thought best to give the general government absolute jurisdiction over it. In order to effect this object, it was necessary to extinguish the State rights. This was done

* Georgetown, it will be remembered, is not properly a part of the *city* of Washington, though in the district of Columbia; but, in point of fact, it is as nigh the President's House, as is the Capitol. There is also a little group of houses at the junction of the two branches of the Potomac.

by Virginia and Maryland ceding sufficient territory to make a district of ten miles square at the point I have described. In this little territory the President exercises the authority which a governor commonly exercises in a State, or rather, there is no intermediate or concurrent executive authority between him and the people, as in the several States; and Congress, though in fact elected by the citizens of the States, does all the legislation. Thus the inhabitants of this territory have no representation whatever; neither voting for members of Congress, nor for members of any State legislature. But their voices are often heard in the way of petitions and demands. It is probable that when they shall become as numerous as the smallest State, they will receive the right of electing representatives.*

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* The writer will take this opportunity of introducing a short account of the formation of the government of the United States, since it will assist to explain a good deal of that which is to follow.

The executive power is in the *President.* He nominates to office; pardons all offences, except convictions under impeachments; conducts negotiations; sees that the laws are administered, and is the military chief of the army and navy, subject to the laws. He makes treaties with the consent of the Senate, and gives his assent to all laws, though a law can be passed without him, if two-thirds of both houses vote in its favour. The *Senate* is the representation of the sovereignty of the States, each State sending two members, who are chosen by their respective legislatures. They serve for six years, one-third vacating their seats every new Congress. They have a concurrent power with the lower house in enacting laws; they ratify treaties; they approve of nominations to office, and they constitute a High Court of Impeachment. The *Representatives* are elected directly by the people, one member being sent from a regulated number of electors. They serve for one Congress, which exists two years, commencing on the 4th of March of one year, and ending on the 3d of March of the year but one that follows. The official term of the President is for two of these Congresses, and that of a Senator for three. The Representatives, or members of the lower house, have concurrent power in the enactment of the laws, and being the grand inquest of the nation, they can impeach any officer of the government.

I think you must be enabled to understand the anomaly of the district of Columbia. It has been necessarily fostered by the nation, for as it has been entirely called into existence, as a separate commu-

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Every citizen of the United States, who is twenty-one years of age, and who possesses certain trifling qualifications, can vote for a member of the House of Representatives, provided he himself be a resident of a State. The *confederation* is only of the *States;* but there are vast regions belonging to them as common property, which do not lie within the boundaries of any State. This country is subdivided for the purposes of convenience, and is governed entirely by the authority of the President and Congress, or according to laws enacted for that purpose. With the exception of one (the *District of Columbia*) they are called *territories.* Thus, besides the twenty-four States, there are the North-western, Michigan, Arkansas, and Florida territories. Certain legislative rights are granted to all the territories that have a sufficient population, but none is yet granted to the *District of Columbia.* Some of the territories even send *delegates* to Congress. These *delegates* can speak, but they cannot vote. As the territories reach an established rate of population, they are uniformly admitted into the confederation, as *States.* It is probable that Michigan, Florida, and Arkansas will be admitted as *States* soon after the next census, after which a long period will be likely to elapse without any farther increase of the number of the *States.* The great difficulty in making a foreigner comprehend the institutions of the United States, exists in the double form of its government. Neither the President, nor Congress, nor both, have authority to interfere with government beyond the power which has been conceded to them by the States. They can make war, raise armies, lay taxes, send fleets to sea, and do many other things, but they cannot punish a theft, unless committed on the high seas, to which their jurisdiction of course extends, or in some other place where they have the exclusive or a concurrent power. Thus, the President of the United States, may pardon a man convicted of robbing the United States' mail, though the act should have been done in the most crowded street of the city of New-York, because the regulation of the mail, being a matter of public convenience, is vested in the government of the confederation, with all power necessary to its safety and despatch; but, if the same coach should be robbed in a forest, and it did not contain a mail, or something else over which the United States have jurisdiction, the robber would be punished by the laws of the State where the offence was committed, In order that these laws may be executed, each government has its own agents. Thus, there are judges of the State courts, and judges of the courts of the United States. The former have jurisdiction in cases that are strictly municipal, or rather which

nity, for their use, it owes most of all it possesses to the public grants and to the presence of the ministers of the government. With a view to *force a town*, establishments have been formed which will probably linger in a doubtful state of existence for a long time to come, if, indeed, they ever prosper. Among others is that of the Navy-Yard.

The village around the Navy-Yard is the least important of the three which properly constitute the community assembled at Washington Proper. You will remember that I now exclude Georgetown from this enumeration. It possesses a different city government, though it is, in point of fact, quite as near the centre, or the President's House, as the Capitol. Alexandria, a little city, also, of about 9000 inhabit-

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are confined to their respective States, and the latter in cases which arise under the laws of the United States, or in cases in which the citizens of *different* States are parties. This latter power of the courts of the general government is one of the most important features of the confederation. It has a tendency to equalize the State laws, by rendering them all subject to the great principles of the constitution, as well as to those of natural justice. It will be seen at once, that this confederation differs from all that we have hitherto known by the complicated nature of the action and re-action between the people and their general government. It is much the same, in fact, as if charters were given to certain towns, in a constitutional government, whether monarchical or not, under favour of which the inhabitants of those towns were authorized to enact certain laws for their own private convenience, while they continued subject at the same time to the general laws of the empire. The theory is certainly different; for here the power which belongs to the general government, is a concession from the particular States, whereas, in the other case, the power exercised by the corporations would be a concession from the principal government. Still the cases bear so strong a resemblance, that one can readily understand the nature of the two authorities which exist in this country. But we in Europe, while we are accustomed to see cities and universities, and even parts of empires, exercising this species of divided sovereignty, have not been accustomed to see them exercising it to the extent that is practised in America. The difference arises from the common circumstance, that the conceding party has, in both cases, seen fit to retain the most of the power in its own hands.

ants, is equally within the limits of the District, but it lies on the opposite side of the Potomac, and at a distance of six miles. There are not many good houses in the quarter of the Navy-Yard, and I should think that a great portion of its inhabitants are people dependent on the establishment for support. Notwithstanding there is a long river to navigate before a ship can get into the bays below, a very considerable number of the public vessels are built and repaired at this spot. Seamen, there are none at Washington, for the simple reason that there is no commerce. A few ships are, indeed, seen at the wharfs of Georgetown and Alexandria, but the navigation of the two places united is far less than that of most of the fourth-rate commercial towns of the Union.

As the department of the navy, and the board of naval commissioners, are both established at Washington, this yard may be of some service in the way of modelling, and for the superintendence of inventions. A ship built here is said to cost more than one built in any of the more northern ports, and it is therefore plain, that when the size of their marine shall compel the Americans to observe a rigid economy in its construction, the relative importance of this yard must cease. It may long continue a school for experiments, but it can never become what was once anticipated for it, a large and flourishing building establishment.

I saw, in the Navy-Yard at Washington, the only public monument in commemoration of the dead that I could find in the city, unless a few simple stones, erected around the graves of members of Congress, who have died while here in the discharge of their official duties, can be so termed. This little monument was erected to commemorate the deaths of the officers who fell in the war with Tripoli; a war to which the United States' marine owes its present high and merited character. It is a simple column,

wrought in Italy at the expense of the survivors, and erected on this spot under the impulse of that stubborn feeling of independence which distinguishes this people. The high-spirited contributors to the little work, thought the Congress did not pay a suitable respect to their petition for a site in a more public situation. They were masters of the Navy-Yard, and in disgust they caused their modest memorial to be put up in the centre of its area. It may be doubted, after all, if any other situation so appropriate, or so touching, could have been found. This monument has received some injury, by having one or two of its ornamental figures broken. On one of its sides I read the following inscription: "Mutilated by Britons, August, 1814." This was the date of the inroad of the English.

Now it struck me that this inscription was in singularly bad taste. The incursion of General Ross was not an affair in which either party should exult. It was no extraordinary military achievement for four or five thousand highly disciplined troops, to land under the protection of an overwhelming naval force,* and to make a forced march, for a few days, through a perfectly defenceless, and nearly uninhabited country; to attack and disperse a hastily assembled body of armed citizens, who were but little, if any, superior to them in numbers; to enter a line of straggling villages; to remain one night, and then to retreat at a rate that was quite as precipitate as their advance. Perhaps it was not bad policy, in the abstract, for a people who possessed the advantages of the British, to take this means of harassing their enemy. But I doubt the policy, in a nation situated precisely as England was and is, of proving so practically to a nation with the spirit, the resources, maritime char-

* The frigates ascended the river to Alexandria.

acter, and prospects of this, that a powerful navy is so absolutely necessary to defend their coast. The use that was made of the success, too, might admit of some cavilling. But, on the other hand, the Americans fell so far short in their defence of what even the case admitted, and so very far short of what, even under less propitious circumstances, they themselves effected at New-Orleans, that wisdom would prescribe silence as the better course. It is permitted for the defenders of Bunker's hill to allude to their defeat, but the chisel of the Americans should have been industriously employed to erase every vestige of, and not to commemorate, even thus indirectly, the occupation of their capital by an enemy. But, even admitting that the defence of the town had been quite equal to the means at hand, what was the immediate offence that called for this particular punishment? The English occupied the Navy-Yard, and, although a little hurried, they certainly had time to have *destroyed* this small monument, instead of *mutilating* it, by knocking the heads off one or two small marble angels. The very nature of the injury proves it was the act of an individual, and not of the authority, which alone should be considered responsible for any grave national accusation. Cadwallader is of my opinion, as, indeed, were half-a-dozen naval officers who showed us through the yard. The latter said that the inscription was by order of an officer of rank, who had reasons for a special degree of antipathy against their late enemy. No man, especially in a country like this, should be permitted, however, thus to interpose his personal resentments between a nation and its dignity.

It is more than a mile from the quarter of the Navy-Yard to that of the Capitol. I have read accounts of this place, which convey an idea that it was lately a forest, and that the wood had been felled in order to make a space to receive the town. There is some

error in this impression. Most of the country, for miles around Washington, was early devoted to the growth of tobacco. It is a baneful consequence of the cultivation of this weed, that, for a long time, it destroys the fertility of the soil. Thus, one sees vast fields here, which wear the appearance of neglected heaths. A growth of low, stunted, dwarfish trees succeeds in time, and bushes must, of course, first make their appearance. I could see no traces of wood in any part of this city, nor for some distance around it, though it is not improbable that some copses of a second growth did exist at the time the plan was formed. All I mean to say is, that the vicinity of the Capitol has rather the appearance of an old and an exhausted, than of what is here called a new country. A great deal of the land in and about the town is not fenced, and the whole appearance of the place is that produced by the separate villages I have described, lying on a great heath, which is beginning to be cultivated, and whose surface is irregularly waving. The avenues in those parts which are not built, consequently, cross these open fields, and the view is perfectly unobstructed on every side.

The quarter of the Capitol stands on elevated ground, and is certainly the most picturesque portion of the city proper. The Capitol itself is placed on the brow of a considerable declivity, and commands a noble view. There is something exceedingly imposing in the aspect of this building, with its powerful accessories of scenery and of moral association. I shall beg your patience while I attempt an imperfect description.

The edifice is of a light greyish freestone. It has been found necessary to paint it white, in order to conceal the marks of the smoke left by the conflagration of 1814. This is in better taste than the inscription on the monument. The effect of a clear, brilliant white, under so fine a sun, is in itself exceedingly

striking. The antiquarian may riot in the rust, but every plain-viewing man sees that the coin is never so beautiful as when it is new from the mint. This freshness of air is rather a peculiarity throughout most of the United States, and it is exactly the appearance the country should wear in order to be in keeping with its recollections.

The Capitol is composed of a centre and two wings. The former is something more than 150 feet square, or nearly square, and the latter are each just 100. The several parts are in a line on the eastern front, and consequently the wings are thrown back on the western. This irregularity of the western façade is a great defect: it impairs the unity, and consequently the majesty, of the edifice. There are too many angles, those fatal blots on the beauty of architecture. There is another serious defect in the building as seen from the west: the centre is not only a story higher, but it is also a story lower than the wings. On this side the edifice stands on the brow of the hill. In order to profit by the formation of the ground, a basement, which is below the level of the earth to the east, but not to the west, has been constructed beneath the centre. But this basement necessarily comes into the view; and the fact of its being painted white, coupled with its airy situation, gives the whole construction the air of a mighty ostrich which is just extending its little wings from the centre of a clumsy body, not to fly, but to scud across the plain beneath. The effect of a fine colonnade is much weakened by this substructure of the edifice. But you, who have so often seen the Louvre, can understand how easy it is to give the basement too much importance in a building; and you, too, who know the Garde Meuble so well, must be sensible of the fine effect of a judicious observance of the proper proportions. Some plan is in agitation to conceal this superabundance of foundation; but it is rare indeed that a capital defect

in a building is successfully repaired by any second-hand expedients.

The eastern front of the Capitol promises to be beautiful: it possesses unity of design, perfect simplicity of outline, and a noble colonnade. As it is not, however, yet completed, it would be premature to pronounce with confidence on its final appearance. The building stands in a spacious inclosure, which is itself nearly surrounded by houses. These dwellings are of bricks, three stories high, and decent, without being in the least elegant. Much the greater part of them are occupied as lodging-houses for the members during the session. There are also a few short streets built about the Capitol.

You will have understood that the plan of the city is that of an infinite number of wide streets intersecting each other at right angles, and which, in their turn, are obliquely intersected by sundry great avenues, which are intended to shorten the distances between the more important points, and, I presume, to beautify the city. Several of these avenues diverge from the Capitol square, like radii from a common centre. They are called after the different States. One, the Pennsylvania Avenue, is the principal street of Washington. Standing at the Capitol, the view along this avenue is somewhat striking. It is built on more than one-half of its whole length, and it is terminated by an oblique view of the President's House. You will bear in mind, that as very few of the dwellings on this avenue approach the Capitol, they form part of another quarter. Still, paved walks and a few scattered buildings, serve to give them something of the air of *beginning* to belong to the same town.

The quarter of the President's House is less compact and more populous than either of the four. It forms, properly, the heart of the city. It approaches towards Georgetown on one side, and the Capitol on

the other, without absolutely joining either. A few of the streets have the air of a town, though there is in every part of this place a striking disproportion in magnitude between the streets and the houses. In order to produce the effect intended, the buildings on the Pennsylvania Avenue, for example, should be of six or seven stories, whereas in fact they are some such houses as one sees in an English country town. Another striking defect in the plan is also made manifest by the waste of room on this avenue. As the avenues cross the streets obliquely, it is plain the points of intersection must make a vast number of acute angles. There is always on one side of each street, between that street and the avenue, a gore of land that is so narrow that it will never be built on until real estate shall get to be far more valuable than it is likely soon to become here. Consequently the distances are unnecessarily increased, and by this means, and its four different quarters, Washington has all the inconvenience of an immense town, without any, or scarcely any, of its counterbalancing conveniences.

It is unnecessary to say any thing more of Georgetown, which is a well-built, clean, and rather pretty town. The avenues between this place and the Navy-Yard, a distance of near five miles, are like so much *grande route* which runs through a little cultivated, but open country, on which stands one straggling town, and a village, and which terminates in a cluster of houses. The buildings of the towns, or villages, on the route, are much like those of other small towns, with the exception of the public edifices, which are like those one sees in a city. If you can reconcile all these contradictions, you may get a tolerably accurate notion of the capital of the United States of America. You will recollect that the whole population of the place, or places, (Georgetown included,) is about 25,000 souls. The whole district, Alexandria included, contains 40,000.

The President's House is a neat, chaste building, of the Ionic order, built of the same material, and painted like the Capitol. It stands on a public square, and in a considerable garden, and is one hundred and seventy feet in length, by eighty-five in breadth. In a parallel line with one of its fronts, though a little in advance, stand the offices of the four great departments. They are large buildings of brick, and are placed in pairs, on each side of the "white house," one in front of the other, having open courts between them. The two most in advance have plain colonnades, but the other two are as naked as can be. Besides these buildings there are one or two more in a distant part of this straggling quarter, which merit no particular description.

TO THE ABBATE GIROMACHI.

&c. &c.

Washington, ———

My attention, after our arrival at this place, was early called to the great body, which was about to assemble. We had taken a little suite of rooms in a lodging-house, or rather tavern, which soon began to fill with members of Congress from all quarters of the country. Perhaps of the whole legislative corps of the country, there is not a single individual who is the proprietor of a dwelling at the seat of government. Those who are of sufficient estate to maintain two houses, have their town residences in the capitals of their own particular States, though a very large majority of the members are far from being men

of large fortunes at all.* There are a few individuals who appear at the capital with their wives and families, but by far the greater part of those who have them, leave them at home. The common practice is, for a certain number of the members who are acquainted with each other, to make what is called a "mess," at some chosen boarding-house. Here they reside together, during the session, like the members of one large family. Even ladies are often included in these arrangements. Others again choose to live entirely secluded: and, in some few instances, families keep their regular winter establishments, in such narrow accommodations as the place affords. The fact that a member is so completely dependent on the public will, for his election, is enough in itself to prevent any one but a man of very large estate from incurring the expense of building on so uncertain a tenure.

A member of the Congress of the United States is, in fact, what the office professes to be, a representative of the people. It is not pretended that he should be, as a matter of course, a gentleman, in the ordinary acceptation of the term. On the contrary, he is very commonly a plain, though always a respectable yeoman, and not unfrequently a mechanic. I remember to have passed a night, in one of the northern States, in a very good, cleanly, cheap and comfortable inn, whose master was a member of the lower house. In the southern States, where the white men of smaller fortunes are by no means of so elevated a character as their brethren of the north, a choice from the middling classes rarely happens; but from the more northern, eastern, and north-western States, such selections are by no means uncommon.

* Does not this fact go to confirm the opinion of Cadwallader, that frugality in the public expenditure of a country, is by no means a necessary consequence of power resting in the hands of the comparatively poor?

When Cadwallader first directed my attention to this fact, I confess a little surprise entered into my view of the composition of the American legislature. Perhaps the circumstance of so material a difference between the Congress and the British Parliament was at the bottom of my wonder; for we in Europe are perhaps a little too apt to try all experiments in liberty, by those which England has so long practised with such comparative success. I alluded, a little freely, to the circumstance of their having so far departed from the practice of the mother country, with a view of extracting an opinion on the subject from my companion. The plan was successful.

"If departure from the policy of our ancestors is to create your wonder, the feeling should be neither new nor trifling. What we do now, in this particular, we have practised, not only without inconvenience, but with signal success, for near seven generations. The representation under the crown differed but little from that of the present day. It is, in truth, a representation; and the surprise should be, not that the people choose so many men of a situation in life closely resembling that of the majority, but rather that they choose so few. There is a practical good sense in the mass of the community, here, that tells them a certain degree of intelligence and of respectability of character is needed in a representative of the nation. No one will deny that they sometimes deceive themselves, but, on the whole, they are sufficiently critical. For native talent, practical intelligence, moral character, and political honesty, the Congress of the United States need not dread a comparison with the legislature of any other country. I do not mean to say that they are perfect, but I am quite certain, from tolerably close observation, that they do as much good and as little harm as any other similar body in the world.

"He who enters the halls of Congress, expecting

to find the same conventional finish of personal deportment, or the same degree of education, as he will find in the British Parliament, or in the French Chambers, enters it under a gross misconception of the nature of its organization. But he who enters either of the two foreign legislative bodies I have named, expecting to meet with the same useful and practical knowledge of life, in those details on which a legislator is called every hour to act, the same degree of native capacity, or even the same aptitude of applying the great principles of government to their direct and desirable uses, will fall into an error quite as gross. We have men, and very many men, in our legislature, that may be safely placed at the side of the most eminent politicians of Europe; and perhaps no people in the world could more easily fill every chair on the floors of the two houses with representatives who, by their intelligence, practical knowledge, independence, and honesty, would do high credit to a nation, than ourselves. But there are many reasons why we do not. The first, and the most important of all, is, that we have happily got the country into that onward movement, that there is little or no occasion for legislative impulses. As a rule, besides the ordinary grants of money, and the usual watchfulness over the proceedings of the executive, the less they do the better. We find it useful to place the check of plain men, with moderated views of life, on the speculations of educated theorists. Besides, every class of society has its interests, and it is proper that they should have their representation. It is certainly true, that many members of Congress sometimes believe it necessary to yield to the mistaken prejudices of a majority of their constituents; but it may be well questioned, whether as much evil to the community results from this pliancy, as from that which obeys the beck of a minister. In America, we have some of the former and none of the latter,

in Europe, you have a great deal of the latter, and none of the former. Now, in the United States, if the mistake of the people entails inconvenience on themselves, they are sure to get rid of it; but I am yet to learn in what manner you dispose of a blunder, or of an intentional innovation, of a minister. You must always remember that we claim no perfection; it is not a quality of earth. All we wish to maintain is, that our system is the best known, and perhaps the best practicable; but if you will show us a better, we will adopt it. Nothing can be more absurd, than to accuse almost the only nation on the earth that is constantly endeavouring to amend its institutions, of a besotted opinion of its own immaculate wisdom. I know you will say, that changes are frequently dangerous, and that they too often lead to evil. Now, I am not at all disposed to deny that you are partially right as respects yourselves; but we know that we can improve, or even afford to deteriorate a little, without much danger; and therein we think we have no small advantage over all the rest of the world. If you doubt the fact, compare our actual situation, the past, and what we have done and are doing, with what other governments have done and are about, and let the result speak for itself.

"You will see on the floors of Congress men belonging to every condition of society known to our community, with the exception of that which necessarily infers great ignorance and vulgarity. All the members are respectable, and very many of them are gentlemen. There are some who are scholars, and not a few have been improved by travel and by observation of other countries. A remote frontier district, however, must send such men as it possesses, or trust its peculiar interests tc those who have but little concern in its welfare. The Senate is, in some respects, rather more select than the lower house because their constituents have a State instead of a

district to choose from, and because that body is expected to temper the proceedings of legislation with a peculiar degree of moderation and dignity.

"In the British Parliament there is some show of this universality of representation. Certain corporations send men of their own stamp; but in England every thing has a tendency to aristocracy, while, in this country, every thing which pertains to the government must seek its support in the democracy. The "worthy alderman," who may have commenced life behind a counter, endeavours to forget his apron when he takes his seat on the opposition benches. Instead of returning to his shop when the session is ended, he becomes a deserter to aristocracy, the moment he has received the seal of office from the people. How far he may contribute to the boasted refinement of the higher classes, I cannot pretend to say; but it is certain that he does not, like his American prototype, assist to give respectability and elevation to that of which he was originally a member. It is this elevation of character among the middling, and even among the more inferior classes of our community, which chiefly distinguishes us from all other nations. Europe must show a population as much accustomed to political power, as moderate in its exercise, as practised in all that controls the general interests of life, and as shrewd in their estimate of character, as this of ours, before she should pretend to infer the results of democratic institutions by any facts drawn from her own experience. We do not deny the universality of human impulses, we only insist that governments have not the habit of giving them fair play. The two houses of Congress are, and ever have been, living proofs that the majority of men are not disposed to abuse power when it is once fairly intrusted to them. There is not a doubt that the comparatively poor and ignorant might fill all our legislative chairs with men of their own

class, and yet they rather take pride in seeing the representation respectable for information. Some part of this seeming generosity is, no doubt, owing to the superior influence of intelligence; but you must allow there is a prospect of quiet and durability under a system in which the majority find no reason to complain, and in which the minority must see the folly of usurpation. But as the two houses are by this time organized, we will go to the Capitol, and hear the message. When on the spot, I will endeavour to direct your attention to such individuals as may serve to elucidate what you have just heard."

We proceeded to the Capitol in a coach. Alighting at the foot of the hill, we mounted it to a door on the western façade, and entered the edifice through its *substratum*. Passing among a multitude of eating rooms, &c. &c., we ascended, by a noble flight of massive steps, to the true basement, or to that story which runs through the whole building. Directly under the dome is a gloomy vaulted hall, that I have heard called the "caucus;" more, I believe, from its fancied fitness for the political meetings that are thus termed, than from the fact that it has ever actually been appropriated to such an use. It has the air, however, of being admirably adapted to the purposes of a secret conclave, though, in truth, it is a common thoroughfare of the building. Immediately above the "caucus" is the principal hall. It is circular, large, high, and covered with a fine dome. There is not much richness in the ornaments of this hall, though it is sufficiently wrought to prevent the appearance of nakedness. It contains, among other things, four bas-reliefs in stone, which are intended to illustrate as many of the most striking incidents in the original settlement of the country.* I have no

* The writer is himself but a traveller, and he should, therefore, speak reverently of the craft. But he will seize this occa-

disposition to criticise their execution. Historical pictures are to be placed in the panels beneath.

From the great hall we passed into that of the House of Representatives. My friend was formerly a member, and by an usage he is permitted to enter the body of the chamber, or rather to occupy a seat that is only separated from those of the actual members by a slight division. Under his auspices, and by the aid of a little interest, I was permitted to be his companion.

The hall of the House of Representatives, without being particularly rich, or highly wrought, is one of the most beautiful apartments I have ever entered. The form is semicircular. It is lighted from above, and from windows on its straight side. Between these windows and the body of the hall, is a sort of lobby or gallery, which is separated from the other parts by a colonnade. Here the members and privileged persons promenade, converse, stand, listen, or repose, without, in fact, quitting the room. It is

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sion to express his surprise at the very different view which he has taken of visible objects from those of some others of the class, who, like himself, have been pleased to put their observations before the world. In the "Personal Narrative of Lieutenant the Honourable Frederic de Roos," p. 15, is the following sentence, while speaking of the apartment just named: "The walls are destitute of ornament, if we except some pieces of sculpture, representing various wars and treaties with the Indians. The artist might have selected subjects more creditable to his country." Now, if the writer has not been greatly deceived, these four bas-reliefs are on the following subjects: the landing of the pilgrims on the Rock of Plymouth; the Treaty of William Penn with the natives for the possession of their soil; the beautiful and touching story of Pocahontas saving the life of Captain Smith, and a personal rencontre of Colonel Boon, the patriarch of Kentucky, with the savages. These are four distinct historical events, which are connected with the settlement of the four principal parts of the Union. More illustrious incidents might have been chosen, beyond a doubt: but there is certainly nothing discreditable to the American character in those they have selected for this purpose.

sufficiently withdrawn to prevent the appearance of disorder, and yet near enough to render the debates audible.

In the centre of the diameter which cuts the circle is the Speaker's chair. It is, in fact, a little sofa, sufficiently large to hold, on occasion, the President of the United States, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker. Immediately in front, and four or five feet lower, is a chair for the presiding member, when the house acts as a committee. On a line with the Speaker the clerks have their places. In front of the chair there is a vacant semicircular space of perhaps five-and-twenty feet in diameter. Then the seats of the members commence. They are arranged in semicircular rows, preserving the form of the exterior walls, and are separated by a great number of little openings, to admit of a passage between them. Each member has an arm-chair and a low desk, in mahogany. In the first row, they sit in pairs, or there is a vacant space between every two, and each successive row increases its number by one member. Thus, in the last row, some six or seven are placed side by side, as on a bench (though actually on chairs), while those in front are in pairs. The practice is for those who arrive first to choose their seats, and the choice is invariably respected.

There is no such thing known as a political division of seats. Members of the same politics certainly often choose to be placed near to each other, and sometimes the entire representation of a particular State is to be seen as near together as possible. But there is no rule in the matter.

The seats of the members are separated from the semicircular passage in which Cadwallader and myself were placed, by no other division than a low railing. Sofas lined the whole of the exterior wall: and as the floor rises a little from the centre, or the area in front of the Speaker, we had the best possible op-

portunity for seeing and hearing. A spacious and commodious gallery, of the same form as the hall completed the outline of the apartment. It was raised several feet above the level of the chamber, and is intended for the use of spectators.

The house was organized when we entered, and was engaged in some business of form. Nearly all the seats were occupied; and, as the message was expected, the gallery was crowded with ladies and well-dressed men. The privileged places around the floor of the hall were nearly all filled. The Speaker was uncovered, but most of the members wore their hats. No one appeared in costume, nor is there any official dress prescribed to the members of Congress for any ceremony whatever.

After what Cadwallader had told me of the true character of the representation of his country, I confess I was rather surprised with the appearance of the individuals who composed this assembly. It was to be expected that they should all be well attired, but, on the whole, with some very few exceptions, they had quite as much the air of the world about them as those who compose the chambers of the two first nations of Europe. No one is allowed to sit in the lower house who has not attained the age of five-and-twenty; but, in point of fact, there is not, probably, a single member of Congress who has seen less than thirty years. The greater number seemed to be men between the ages of thirty-five and fifty-five. There were but very few who could be termed old. All, or very nearly all, were natives of the country.

I was struck with the simple but imposing aspect of this assembly. Though so totally destitute of any personal decorations, the beauty of the hall, with its magnificent row of massive columns,* the great neat-

* The roof of the hall of the House of Representatives is supported by a noble semicircle of columns of pudding-stone. They

ness of the fautëuil and desks, the beautifully carpeted floors, and the long range of sofas, serve to relieve a scene that might otherwise have been too naked. It appeared as if the members had said, thus much may you do for the benefit of comfort, for the encouragement of the arts, and, perhaps, as a testimonial of the respect due to the sacred uses of the place, but man must be left in the fullest force of his simplicity. None of the attendants even wore any badges of their offices. There were neither swords, chains, collars, stars, bayonets, nor maces, seen about the place, though a quiet, and order, and decency, reigned in the hall that bespoke the despotic dominion of that mighty, though invisible, monarch—the Law.

A discussion on some question of order was getting to be a little general, and one member was addressing the chair [they speak from their places, as in the British Parliament] with some earnestness, when the principal door was thrown open, and an officer proclaimed aloud, "A message from the President." The members all rose in their places, the Speaker included, when a young gentleman entered, and passed through the body of the house to the chair. He was attired in a neat morning-dress, and having placed his document in the hand of the Speaker, he bowed and withdrew. It was then decided that the communication should be read.* There was much interest

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are highly polished, and have a pleasing no less than a striking effect.

* The instances of a propensity in Europeans to misconstrue the political and moral condition of the United States are numberless. One may be quoted here with propriety. Since the return of the writer to Europe, he has, on more than one occasion, heard the fact that the President of the United States sends a message to Congress, commented on in a significant manner as if the circumstance were portentous of some great political change! "Parliament would scarcely brook a *message*," said an Englishman, with emphasis, when the subject was alluded to. The writer saw nothing, at the time, in the thing itself, but the

to hear this document, which always contains a great outline of the state of the republic. It was a clear, succinct narrative of what had been done in the course of the past year, of the condition of the

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most perfect simplicity; but, determined to sift the matter to the bottom, he mentioned the subject in a letter to his American friend, and extracts a part of his reply: "I am not at all surprised," said Cadwallader, "that thousands in Europe should easily pervert every possible circumstance into an evidence of a state of things which they rather desire than seriously expect. There has not been a single change, however, in all our usages, which goes less to prove the justness of their anticipations, than the fact you have mentioned. When the government, as it now exists, was first organized, Washington met the two houses and made his annual communication in a speech. The practice had prevailed in the colonial legislatures. We have never been in a hurry to make unnecessary innovations. Reform marches with a dignified pace—it is revolution that is violent. The States continued the practice of the colonies. It was quite natural that the first Presidents should conform to existing usages for a time. We have never been great sticklers for shadows, though no principle is ever listened to that is likely to entail a disadvantage. In the course of a few years, men began to ask themselves, why does the President make a *speech* at the opening of a session? He sends messages at all other times, and why not on this occasion? The substance of what he has to communicate, can be told by a message quite as well as by a speech. The amount of it all then is, that the parade of a speech is a mere matter of state and show, and although some little ceremony is, perhaps, necessary, we ought to have as little as possible, since common sense, which is our palladium, is always a sufferer in ceremonies. You will understand me; a state of society may exist, in which it is good sense to adopt ceremony, but such is not the case in the year 1827, in the United States of America. Every sage physician adapts his remedy to the disease. Mr. Jefferson dispensed with speeches, because they did no good, and might do harm by drawing us nearer to the usages of Europe, when it is so often our business to recede from them. For my own part, I think it rather better as it is, though it cannot be a matter of much moment. It is, however, odd enough, that the very usage which has been adopted for its simplicity and republicanism, should be tortured into a proof of a directly contrary tendency. It may be a sufficient answer to the remark of your English friend, 'that the British Parliament would be apt to grumble at receiving a message from the king,' to say that should Congress not

finances, of the several negotiations, and concluded with a statement of what the people had a right to anticipate for the future.

When the message was ended, Cadwallader introduced me to several of the members to whom he was personally known. Most of them were men of good manners, and of education, though one or two were certainly individuals who had paid far more attention to the substance of things than to forms. The former were of course of that class of society which, in Europe, would be termed the gentry, and the others were probably farmers, if not mechanics. There was an air of great self-possession and decorum in the latter; nor could the slightest visible difference be traced between the respect which they received, and that which their more polished confederates bestowed on each other. A simple, quiet courtesy is certainly the tone of manners in Congress. While we stood together in the lobby, a grave-looking, middle-aged man, of a slightly rustic air, approached, and addressed my companion. His manner was manly and independent, but at the same time decent, and I think it was to be distinguished by a shade of respect. They shook hands, and conversed a little concerning some questions of local politics. Promises were made of exchanging visits. "This is my friend, the ———," said Cadwallader; "a gentleman who is travelling in our country." The stranger saluted me, offering his hand with the utmost simplicity. "If this gentleman comes into our part of the country, I hope to see him," he said, and soon after took his leave. When he was gone, I learned that this individual was a member of Congress from the county in which the pater-

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receive one from the President at a pretty early day in the session, they would be very apt to appoint a committee to inquire why he had forgotten to lay the state of the nation before them. I am no quarreller about terms, and I leave you to decide where the substance of things is to be found."

nal estates of my friend lie; that he was a farmer of moderate means and good character, whom his fellow-citizens had sent to represent them. His constituents might very possibly have made a better choice, and yet this man was not useless, since he served as a check on the schemes of those who would be legislating for effect. A gentleman-like man of sixty came next, and he and my friend met as equals in all respects, except that the latter paid a slight deference to the years of his acquaintance. I was introduced. We touched our hats, and exchanged a few words. The next day, I received this gentleman's card, and as soon as his visit was returned, an invitation to dine in his private lodgings followed. This was Mr. ——, a man of immense hereditary landed estate. His alliances, fortune, and habits, (though tempered by the institutions of his country,) are, to all intents and purposes, the same as those of a gentleman or nobleman in Europe. His character is excellent, and, in consequence, he is now, and may be to the day of his death, the representative of his native district. Here you have the two extremes of the representation of this country—a yeoman, and a great proprietor whose income would put him on a level with most of the great men of our hemisphere. They represent no particular interests, for all interests unite to send them here. They happen to please their constituents, and the fact that the one is a yeoman, and the other a species of lord of the manor, produces no effect whatever. These men meet in Congress on terms of perfect equality. It often happens, that a yeoman, possessed of a vigorous native mind, has vast influence.

While quitting the Capitol, two more members of Congress spoke to Cadwallader. They walked with us the whole length of the avenue. One of them was a man of a fashionable air, and of exceedingly good manners. He spoke French, and we conversed to-

gether for some time in that tongue. I found him agreeable and intelligent, and was glad to perceive he was disposed to renew the interview. But the other individual puzzled me not a little. In dress and externals, he differed but little from his more agreeable companion. His air, however, was not that of a man of the world, and his language was sufficiently provincial to be remarked. I should not have taken him for one of a station in life to be found in such company, did I not know his official rank, and were I not prepared for the great admixture of ordinary American society. But if I was a little perplexed by the provincialisms of this individual, I was not less surprised at his shrewdness and intelligence. He used his words with great discrimination, and with perfect grammatical accuracy; and he spoke not only with good sense, but frequently with power, and always with prodigious clearness. When we parted, I again expressed surprise at the manifest difference in manners that existed between the two members.

"You will begin to know us in time," returned Cadwallader. "Those men are both lawyers. He whose air and language are so unexceptionable, is a member of a family long known in this country for its importance. You see he has not lost, nor will he be likely to let his posterity lose, the manners of the world. He is far from being rich, nor is he remarkable for talent, though rather clever. You find he has a seat in Congress. The other is the child of an affluent tradesman, who has given his son an education for the bar, but who could not give him what he had not himself,—a polished exterior. But he is gleaning, and, before he dies, he will be in the way of imparting a better air to his descendants. In this manner is the whole of our community slowly rising in the scale of mere manners. As to talent, this provincial lawyer, for he is provincial in practice as

well as by birth, has, as you must have observed, enough of it. He is a good man in Congress, whatever he may be in the saloons. He has got the intelligence, and no small part of the feelings, of a gentleman; he may never get the air, for he began too late for that, and, like most men, he probably affects to despise an unattainable advantage. But as it is in nature to wish for distinction, rely on it, he is secretly determined to amend. Perhaps one of these parties loses a little by the intimate association which is a necessary consequence of their common situation; but the gradual approximation is, on the whole, produced by the improvement of the other. In the great essentials of soundness of feeling, morals, and common sense, they are quite on an equality."

TO THE ABBATE GIROMACHI,

&c. &c.

FLORENCE.

Washington, ———

I HAVE been a daily visiter at the Capitol. The proceedings of the two houses are never without interest, since they control the entire foreign policy of this growing republic, which is daily becoming of more importance in the eyes of Christendom. Some of the peculiar practice of American legislation may be of interest, and before I write of individuals, I will attempt a brief outline of their forms.

You probably know already that the President of the United States is assisted by a cabinet. It is composed of four Secretaries, (state, treasury, war, and navy,) and of the Attorney-General. As the President is alone answerable for his proper acts, these minis

ters have no further responsibility than as their own individual agency is concerned. They have no seats in Congress, since the constitution forbids that any officer of the general government should be a representative either of a State (a Senator), or of the people (a member of the House of Representatives). Thus, the judges and generals, and colonels, of which one reads in Congress, are not officers of the United States, but of the States themselves. The difference is material, since the authorities by whom they are commissioned have no power over the measures on which they are called to legislate. You will understand me better if I go a little into detail.

The President of the United States has no voice in the appointment of any officer whatever, under the government of a State. The government of a State has no voice whatever in the enactment of the laws, or in the appointment of the officers, of the United States. There may be, and unquestionably there sometimes is, a reciprocal influence exerted between them; but the instances are rare, and liable to a good deal of explanation. It is not probable that the government of the United States ever interests itself at all in the appointments of a State; but, as the appointments of the United States are often of a nature to produce a direct effect on the interests of a particular State, it is not uncommon for the members of its government to lend their influence to such applicants as they believe the most likely to be of benefit to its community. Still, it is no more than influence; no two governments in the world being more perfectly distinct from each other, than that of the United States and that of an individual member of the confederation, if we make the single exception, that both are bound to respect the great principles of the constitution.

It is an unsettled point whether Congress has a right to admit the ministers to possess consultative voices in

the two houses. I think the better opinion is, that they have; but the practice has never yet been adopted. Indeed, there is a sort of fastidious delicacy observed on this subject, which, in effect, prevents the Secretaries from attending the debates even as auditors. I have never yet seen any member of the cabinet in the chamber of either body. On the last day of the session, it is the practice of the President to come to the Capitol, and to occupy an apartment which is fitted expressly for his use. The object of this visit is to be near the legislative bodies, in order that he may give his assent to, or rejection of, the bills that always accumulate at that time. He is, of course, attended by his cabinet, the members of which, I am told, are then in the habit of sometimes entering the halls. This is the only occasion on which the President appears in the Capitol, unless it be at his inauguration, or at some ceremony not at all connected with government.

The exclusion of the ministers from the debates is thought, by many people, to be a defect, since, instead of the verbal explanations which they might give, if present, it is now necessary to make formal demands on the different departments for information. On the other hand, it is contended that the existing practice compels members to make themselves familiar with details, and that they are none the worse legislators for their labour. In no case could the minister be allowed to vote, or even to propose a law, directly.

For the introduction of the laws, there are two courses in practice, though only one in theory. Each Secretary makes a formal report of the state of his particular department at the commencement of every session. In this report, he takes care to recommend those measures that he deems needful for his immediate branch of the public service. The substance of these reports is embodied in the message of the President; and it is the duty of that high officer to

invite the attention of the legislature to such subjects as he may consider of national importance. The matter of the message is necessarily divided into a certain number of leading topics. Regular, or, as they are here called, standing committees, are appointed at the commencement of every Congress.* To these committees all the usual matter of the message is referred. Thus, whatever relates to the finances is referred to "the committee of ways and means;" to the army, to "the military committee," &c. &c. If the message should include any extraordinary matter, as is usually the case, a special committee is appointed to attend to it. At the head of each committee, (they exist in both houses), there is placed some member who is supposed to be more than commonly acquainted with its business. As Congress is so completely composed of practical men, these duties are generally discharged with a good deal of dexterity, and often with rare ability. These committees have rooms of their own, where they assemble and get through with all the drudgery of their duties. They communicate with the departments; and when there is an agreement of opinion, the necessary bills are framed between them. The chairman is the usual organ of communication with the house. We will, however, assume a case, and follow it through its legislative forms, in order to render the usage as clear as possible.

The President and his cabinet believe the public good requires that a dozen regiments should be added to the army. The fact is communicated to Congress, in the annual message, accompanied by a statement of the political events which have induced the necessity. Then comes the report of the Secretary, with a detailed view of the present force, and a general comparative statement of that which it is thought will

* Once in two years.

be needed. The military committees enter into a minute examination of the circumstances and estimates, and make such reports to the two houses as they deem prudent. If it be in favour of an increase, they recommend a bill. In order to get rid of certain forms, and with a view to render legislation deliberate, the whole house sit as a *committee*. This, you know, is a practice derived from the English Parliament The bill, amended or not, is first passed by the committee of the whole house; but its opponents have still a chance to dispute its passage in the house itself. When it has passed one of the houses, it is sent to the other, where it goes through the same forms. It is hardly necessary to say that the committees of the two houses commonly consult together and make their reports as nearly alike as possible. In general they are the same, though the fate of a bill is by no means sure because it has been approved by the committees. All these forms do not prevent individual members from offering bills of their own; it is merely a practice, adopted to favour examination, and to expedite business.

When a bill has passed the two houses, it is signed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of the Senate, and sent to the President for his approbation. That officer submits it to his cabinet, as a matter of prudence and of courtesy, though not of right. Should he choose it, however, he can demand the written opinion of any of his ministers, and then the individual who gives it may be supposed to become responsible for the honesty of his views. The President decides as he sees fit; there remaining no alternative to the minister but submission, or separation from an administration of whose policy he disapproves. If the President sign the bill, it is a law; but if he does not sign it, he is obliged to send it back to Congress with his reasons. Should he neglect to do either, for ten days, it be-

comes a law without his agency; and should he then refuse to sign it, he may be impeached and punished, as, probably, might such of his ministers who, it could be proved, had been accessary to his obstinacy. If Congress be not satisfied with the objections of the President, they put the bill to the question again; and should two-thirds of both houses support it, it becomes a law, without his agency.

The Congress of the United States is not remarkable for the despatch of public business, nor is it desirable that it should be. One of the greatest merits of the peculiar government of the country, is to be found in the fact, that the people are left, as much as possible, to be the agents of their own prosperity. The object of the laws is protection rather than patronage. Haste is rarely necessary, where such a state of society exists; and though there may be, and, undoubtedly, frequently is, inconvenience in the delays that sometimes occur, more good than evil is thought to follow the practice. The cause of delay most complained of, is the habit of making set speeches, which is, perhaps, too common.

You are not, however, to suppose that a member actually talks seventy-two hours without stopping, because he is said to have occupied the house three days. Though Æolus himself does not seem to be longer winded than some of the American legislators, none of them are quite equal to such a blast. If we say nine hours, perhaps, we get the maximum of their breath; and even this period is to be divided into three several and distinct divisions. The houses meet at twelve o'clock. They are commonly occupied in the order of the day until two, when they go into committees of the whole, or take up the deferred business. This leaves the Demosthenes of the occasion but three hours each day for the exercise of his oratory. But bottom enough for three days, on the same subject, is not the fortunate quality of many

men: so, after all, very few members ever occupy the house more than an hour or two. The evil does not so much exist in the extraordinary length of the speeches, as in the number of those who can arrange words enough to fill an hour of time.

The Americans are fond of argument. They discuss in society, a thing which is done nowhere else, I believe. The habit is often disagreeable, since their opinions are not unfrequently coarsely urged; but the truth is profusely shaken from its husks, in these sharp, intellectual encounters. It is not surprising, that men, who have been accustomed all their lives to have a word in what is passing, should carry the desire to speak into a body which is professedly deliberative. Still, if the trifling inconvenience of these delays shall be put in contrast with the cold and uncalculating injury, the prodigal expenditure, and the quiet corruption with which legislation so often flows on in its silent course, elsewhere, the advantage will be found immensely on the side of these talkers.

In point of manner, the debates in both houses of Congress are conducted with decorum. Those in the Senate are particularly dignified; that body maintaining, at all times, rather more of gravity than the other. In the Senate, the members are all uncovered; in the lower house, they wear their hats, if they please. The arrangements of the two halls are very much the same; but the Senate chamber is, of course, much the smallest. The members of the Senate may be, on the whole, rather older than the representatives; though there are several between the ages of thirty and five-and-forty. It is necessary to be thirty, in order to sit.

The forms of the two houses are the same. They meet at a stated hour (12 o'clock), and, after listening to prayers, the regular business of the day is commenced. You would probably suppose that, in a

country where there is no established religion, it might be difficult for an indiscriminately collected assembly to agree on the form in which these petitions should be offered up to the Deity. Nothing is, however, more untrue. Each house chooses its own chaplain, or chaplains, who are sometimes of one denomination, and sometimes of another. Prayers are vastly better attended than in England, on such occasions. I remember once to have asked the member from Cadwallader's county, how he reconciled it to his conscience, to listen to the petitions offered up by a clergyman of a sect entirely different from his own. The simple answer was, that he believed the Almighty understood all languages.*

Although instances of want of temper and of violent expressions have certainly occurred in Congress, they are rare, and always strongly condemned. Each new speaker is patiently heard, and there is no other manner of manifesting indifference to his logic practised, than those of writing letters, reading newspapers, and sometimes of quitting the hall. There is far greater silence than in the French Chambers, though more moving about than in the House of Commons, for the simple reason that there is more room to do it in. There is sometimes a low laugh; but systematic coughing is never heard. Cries of approbation or of disapprobation, interruptions, unless to demand order, or any other similar indecencies, are unknown. These people appear to me to have no fear of themselves, or of any body else, in matters

* The writer was afterwards present when a Roman Catholic preached to both houses of Congress in the hall of the House of Representatives, although it is not probable that more than one or two of the members were of his religious persuasion, if, indeed, there was one. Nearly all of the higher officers of government were present, though they were Protestants to a man. Nor was there any show of liberality in the affair at all, but every thing appeared natural, and quite as a matter of course.

that relate to government. They go on boldly, systematically, and orderly, without any visible restraint. It appears as if they knew that use and education had implanted such general principles in every man, that they know where to find him, on all grave occasions. If they scatter firebrands freely in debate, and in their journals, it is because they are sure there are no combustibles into which they can fall. The gallery of Congress is very capacious, and any one may enter it, who pleases. If there could be a hazardous experiment tried on the government, I think it would be in attempting to browbeat Congress. It would be quite as safe to attempt to assassinate a sovereign, in the midst of his guards. The members, the army, the navy, the community, and even the women, would rise in support of its privileges. The perfect security of its rights might render the effort of an individual too ridiculous for resentment; but any serious plot of the sort would be sure to draw down the indignation of the whole republic.—Adieu.

TO THE COUNT JULES DE BÉTHIZY,

&c. &c.

Washington, ———

To you, who so stoutly maintain that the regulations of etiquette are necessary to order, it may be surprising to learn with how little of preparation the functionaries of this government get through the ceremonials of their offices. Just so far as etiquette is of use in facilitating intercourse, is it rational; but these people very rightly believe, that their institutions enable them to move on with far less than is

practised in Europe. We will seize a moment to discuss the matter in some of its general bearings.

In point of style, there is none whatever practised in addressing any one officer of the government. The naked appellation of the office is used in conversation sometimes, and commonly, though not always, in notes and letters. The tone can be taken best from the incumbents themselves. An invitation to dine at the "White House," always runs, "The President requests the pleasure," &c. A secretary commonly says, "Mr. ———— requests," &c. Now, the best style, and that which is expected, is to reply in the same form. Thus a note should be addressed "To Mr. ——," to "the President," "To Mr. Adams, (the secretary of state)," or "To Mr. Southard (the secretary of the navy)." The use of honourable to either, or indeed to any one else, is not deemed *bon ton*. It is done, however, quite frequently by those who are ignorant of the tone of the place. The use of the terms "excellency" and "honourable," came in with the colonial practices. I have more than once had occasion to say that these people have never been violent in their innovations. The changes in things not deemed material, have always been gradual, and the work of time. Washington, at the head of the army, was called "his excellency," as a matter of course, and he carried the title with him to the chair of state. The colonial governors had the same title, and one of the States (Massachusetts) continued it in its constitution. But, though often observed, even now, it is a practice gradually falling into disuse. It is not seriously pretended there is any thing anti-republican in giving a title to a public officer; indeed many contend it should be done, as a way of imparting more consideration to the rank; but, as near as I can learn, the taste of the nation is silently receding from the custom. Cadwallader tells me that, twenty years ago, it would have been thought rather a breach

of politeness to address a letter to a member of Congress, without prefixing 'honourable' to the name, though the better practice now is to omit it. When I asked him if he saw any reason for the change, he answered, none, but the fact that the thing grew contemptible from its frequency.

" Twenty years ago," he continued, " an officer of the militia, above the rank of captain, was sure of bearing his title; but now, among men of a certain class, it is getting into disuse, unless one has reached the rank perhaps of general. There is no general rule, however, as the people of the country are fond of calling a man by the title of an office which they may have had an agency in conferring. I think there is a quiet waggery in the nation, that takes pleasure in giving quaint names. Thus, dwarfs are often called ' major '*—heaven knows why! but I have met three who all bore this title. I have a gardener, who is universally styled judge, and an old black family servant is never known by any other name than that of governor. Nicknames are rather too much in use with us. The liberty is not often taken, of course, with men of the better orders. They are much disposed to dispense with all sorts of titles. We call a gentleman an esquire, by courtesy, according to a practice imported from England; though some one-sided masters of ceremonies deny that any but magistrates, counsellors, &c. have a right to the title; just

* The writer has just seen an American play-bill, in which Major Stevens, a dwarf, is advertised to enact the part of Tom Thumb. There is also a strange effect, in the way of names, produced by reading. The writer met several men, who were called *Don* Sebastian, *Don* Alonzo, &c. &c. In one instance, he knew a person who was called Lord George Gordon. The latter proceeded from waggery, but the mothers of the former had found names in books that captivated their fancy. Women of a similar rank of life in Europe, would know but little of titles beyond the limits of their own parishes.

as if even they could find better authority for their claims than any body else. The truth is, the courts continue a few of the colonial forms, which may be well enough, and their officers sometimes think that use has grown into a law. In New-England the custom goes so far as to call a deacon of a church by his title; and I have even seen 'serjeant' placed before the name of a respectable yeoman. The practice, as it confines the appellation to the office, is rather republican than otherwise; but, as I have just said, it is getting into disuse, because it is no longer a distinction."

In conversation, the actual President, I find, is called Colonel Monroe. I am told his predecessors were addressed as Mr. Madison, Mr. Jefferson, Mr. Adams, and General Washington.* The Secretaries and the members of Congress are addressed as other gentlemen. In the two houses, the etiquette is to speak of another member as "the gentleman from Virginia," "the gentleman from Connecticut, who spoke last," and, sometimes, as "the honourable gentleman," &c. The President is commonly alluded to, in debate, as "the executive." Other indirect means of indicating the members meant, are sometimes adopted; but, as in the British Parliament, names are always avoided.

No civil officer of the government has a costume, except the judges of the supreme court. The latter wear, in court, plain black silk gowns. They commenced with wigs and scarlet robes, but soon discarded them as inconvenient. The President might, on occasion, appear attired either as a general or an admiral; and, in some instances, Washington did as the former; but it is the usage for the President to

* The present President (1828) is called Mr. Adams. The writer never heard the term "excellency" used, in speaking to him or to his predecessor.

dress like any other gentleman, consulting his own taste and appearance. The same is true of the Vice-President, of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and of all other officers and members. You know there is no order of knighthood in the country. At the close of the war of the revolution, the officers of the army formed themselves into a society called the society of Cincinnati. They adopted a little enamelled badge, which bears some resemblance to a simple European cross. Even this immaterial distinction gave offence, and some of the State societies were abolished many years ago. The plan was to perpetuate the feeling which had united them as a corps, through their descendants, it being intended that the eldest male heir should succeed to the father. You may trace, in this little circumstance, the lingering of ancient prejudices. Still, had not Washington been at the head of this society, and had not the services of its members been so undeniable, and so pitifully rewarded, this trifling consolation to their pride would not have been endured even at that time. The society is daily getting of less importance, though possibly of more interest, and there is no doubt but it will disappear entirely, with the individuals who were personal actors in the scenes which called it into existence. It is probable there will be no more members of the Cincinnati a dozen years hence.

The constitution has shown a marked jealousy of the introduction of any distinctions that are not solely attached to office, which, as you know, are fluctuating, and entirely dependent on popular favour. Thus, no American can receive a title, or a decoration, from a foreign court, without losing his citizenship, nor can any officer of the government receive even a trifling present from another power. There are a good many people here whose fathers bore titles. In all cases, where use had not become too strong, they

were dropped. In short, I think the tone in all such matters in America, is to follow the natural course of things. It is not natural for a community, like this, to cherish hereditary titles, and yet it would be doing violence to usage by attempting to change the appellation of an individual, who had been known by a title for perhaps half a century. The Dutch in New-York had a sort of lords of the manor, who were known by the title of patroons (paterons). Cadwallader tells me that, in his youth, he knew several of these patroons. But they have all disappeared, except one. The exception is a gentleman resident at Albany, who is perhaps the greatest landed proprietor in the United States. Every body, who is familiar with the habits of that part of the country, calls this gentleman "the patroon." His father, and several of his ancestors, bore the same appellation. There is not the slightest jealousy or feeling on the subject. He is a member of Congress; and though persons from other parts of the Union address him by his real name, my friend always calls him "patroon." The immense estate of this gentleman was entailed, and he came into possession about the time of the revolution. But there are no more entails in any of the States; and although the possessions of the patroon will undoubtedly go to his children, it is more than probable that the appellation will cease with his own life.

The etiquette of the American government is as simple as possible. Some attention to forms is found convenient, and as so many foreign ministers reside here, perhaps it is necessary. The practice of all American society, in respect to precedency, is very much like your own, always excepting the great officers of the two governments. Age, talent, and character, exercise a great and a natural influence, and there, I think, the matter is permitted to rest. A governor of a State, or even a Senator of the United

States, would be expected to lead the mistress of the house to the table, perhaps, just as a stranger, or a man of particular personal claims, would be permitted to do the same thing. But the deference paid to official rank would be very apt to end there. A mere member of the lower house may receive certain distinctions in public ceremonies, but scarcely in society. It would be intolerable for a son of the President to presume on his birth in any situation. He might, and certainly would be more caressed, on account of the circumstance; but he must always content himself with precisely the degree of attention that is offered. The son of any other gentleman is, in every respect, his equal in society, and the son of any other man his equal before the world. You will understand me to speak now with direct reference to practice, for in theory there is no difference at all.*

* The writer, since his return to Europe, has had an opportunity of ascertaining how far the question of precedency is sometimes pushed in England. At an entertainment given not long since in London, there were present, besides many Englishmen of rank, a Russian and a Roman Prince. The high-bred English peers could not hesitate to give the *pas* to the strangers; but these gentlemen were delicate in respect of each other. The question was one far too awful for the mistress of the house to attempt to decide. After the whole party had stood in reverential silence for a sufficiently awkward minute, the ladies moved to the banquet in a body, followed by the gentlemen in the same solitary order. Within a fortnight of that memorable *coup d'étiquette*, the writer was present at a similar entertainment at Paris. Here there were also men of distinction from different countries, without any graduated scale to determine their corelative rank. There was, however, one gentleman whose claims, though a countryman of the hostess, might, in all fairness, be considered to be pre-eminent, since, to personal rank, he united the highest talents, and the utmost private merit. The lady of the house, in order to anticipate any doubts, took his arm, and then, with exquisite grace and tact, she saw each of the other claimants accommodated with a proper companion, and every one advanced towards the *salle à manger* in less than a minute

The present Secretary of State* undertook, in great simplicity, to give his opinions lately on some questions of etiquette, connected with the subject of official intercourse. There was probably a great deal of good sense in what he published, and no doubt the practices he recommended were not without convenience. But it is generally thought he committed an error in writing about them at all. Now, it is just in this fact that I think the common sense of the Americans is to be traced. Whatever is convenient, in the way of ceremony, they are very apt to adopt; but they are not disposed to make trifles matters of serious discussion. The Secretary was a good deal quizzed for his essay, though I dare say most people practised the very thing they laughed at.

At Washington official rank is certainly more attended to than elsewhere. I cannot give you an insight into the whole table of precedency, but some of its secrets have been practically divulged in my presence. The day after our arrival, Cadwallader and myself left cards at the President's House; at the houses of the heads of departments; at those of the foreign ministers; and at the lodgings of a dozen Senators. We met sundry members of Congress, but my friend did not appear to think it necessary to treat them as personages entitled to particular deference. Their claims form a disputed point, I find; but Cadwallader knows his own foothold in society too well to trouble himself with a disputed point. We called on a few, as "good fellows," but on none officially.

Our cards were all returned, except by the President. During the session this functionary never visits, though he receives twice a week. Between the sessions, when the society of Washington is reduced to a very few families, I understand he consults his own pleasure. In the course of the week we received

* The actual President.

notes to attend the "evenings" of those who opened their houses; and invitations to dine with the Secretaries soon followed. The dinner of the President came last; but as it contains the essence of all the etiquette of this simple court, I shall select it for a short description.

Cadwallader was personally known to Mr. Monroe (the President), and we took an opportunity to repeat our call between the time of leaving our cards and the day of the dinner. The principal entrance of the "White House" communicates with a spacious vestibule, or rather a hall. From this we passed into an apartment, where those who visit the President, in the mornings, are to wait their turns for the interview. Our names had been given in at the door, and after two or three, who preceded us, had been admitted, we were desired to follow the domestic. Our reception was in a cabinet, and the visit of course quite short. Colonel Monroe received us politely, but with an American gravity, which perhaps was not misplaced in such an officer. He offered his hand to me, though an entire stranger, and asked the commonplace questions concerning my visit to the country. We took our leave in less than ten minutes.

I found the President a man of a gentlemanlike, but of a grave and simple deportment. He expressed his hope of seeing us soon again, in a way to make me suspect we had rather been invited to his dinner, as a matter of course, than by any express commands. Let that be as it might, we went on the appointed day, with as much confidence as if the banquet were expressly spread in our behalf.

On this occasion we were honoured with the presence of Mrs. Monroe, and of two or three of her female relatives. Crossing the hall, we were admitted to a drawing-room, in which most of the company was already assembled. The hour was six. By far the greater part of the guests were men, and perhaps

two-thirds were members of Congress. It is unnecessary to describe a company that was composed of a very fair representation of Congress, which, as you already know, is composed of a very fair representation of the whole country, the very lowest classes always excepted. There was great gravity of mien in most of the company, and neither any very marked exhibition, nor any positively striking want, of grace of manner. The conversation was commonplace, and a little sombre, though two or three men of the world got around the ladies, where the battle of words was maintained with sufficient spirit. I do not know that it differed materially from a reunion any where else. To me the entertainment had rather a cold than a formal air. When dinner was announced, the oldest Senator present (there were two, and seniority of service is meant) took Mrs. Monroe and led her to the table.* The rest of the party followed without much order. The President took a lady, as usual, and preceded the rest of the guests.

The drawing-room was an apartment of a good size, and of just proportions. It might have been about as large as a better sort of Paris *salon*, in a private hotel. It was furnished in a mixed style, partly English and partly French, a custom that prevails a good deal in all the fashions of this country. It was neat, sufficiently rich, without being at all magnificent, and, on the whole, was very much like a similar apartment in the house of a man of rank and fortune in Europe. The dining-room was in a better taste than is common here, being quite simple, and but little furnished. The table was large and rather handsome. The service was in china, as is uniformly the case, plate being exceedingly rare, if at all used. There was, however, a rich plateau, and a great abundance

* The wife of the President is always styled the same as any other lady.

of the smaller articles of table plate. The cloth, napkins, &c. &c., were fine and beautiful.

The dinner was served in the French style, a little Americanized. The dishes were handed round, though some of the guests, appearing to prefer their own customs, very coolly helped themselves, to what they found at hand. Of attendants there were a good many. They were neatly dressed, out of livery, and sufficient. To conclude, the whole entertainment might have passed for a better sort of European dinner party, at which the guests were too numerous for general, or very agreeable discourse, and some of them too *new* to be entirely at their ease. Mrs. Monroe arose at the end of the dessert, and withdrew, attended by two or three of the most gallant of the company. Being a stranger, Jules, I forgot the credit of the club, and remained to see it out. No sooner was his wife's back turned, than the President of the United States reseated himself, inviting his guests to imitate the action, with a wave of the hand, that seemed to say, "Now have we a matrimonial fourth of July." Has it never struck you, Comte de Béthizy, that these domestic subjects feel a species of momentary triumph, as they figure at the head of their tables without any rival in authority near? Your Englishman, and his cis-atlantic kinsman, are the only real slaves in their own households. Most other husbands consider matrimony, more or less, a convenience; but these downright moralists talk of its obligations and duties, Obligations! There is our triumph. It is when they feel the man within them waxing bold, as they imbibe courage with their wine, that the wife prudently retires, rather than remain to dispute a sway that she knows is about to weaken itself, by libations to victory. I never feel so thoroughly independent as when I see one of your immoderately henpecked heroes, bristling up and chuckling with glee as he looks around on the domestic throne which

has just been momentarily abandoned by her who is seated there all the rest of the twenty-four hours. No one need seek deeper into the history of customs, than the date of this triumph, to find the origin of drunkenness after dinner.

I cannot say that Colonel Monroe abused his opportunity. After allowing all his guests sufficient time to renew, in a few glasses, the recollections of similar enjoyments of their own, he arose himself, giving the hint to his company, that it was time to join the ladies. In the drawing-room coffee was served, and every body left the house before nine.

On the succeeding Wednesday, Mrs. Monroe opened her doors to all the world. No invitation was necessary, it being the usage for the wife of the President to receive once a fortnight during the session, without distinction of persons. I waited for this evening with more curiosity than any that I remember ever to have sighed for. I could not imagine what would be the result. To my fancy, a more hazardous experiment could not be attempted. "How dare she risk the chance of insult—of degradation? or how can she tolerate the vulgarity and coarseness to which she must be exposed?" was the question I put to Cadwallader. "*Nous verrons*," was the phlegmatic answer.

We reached the White House at nine. The court (or rather the grounds) was filled with carriages, and the company was arriving in great numbers. On this occasion two or three additional drawing-rooms were opened, though the frugality of Congress has prevented them from finishing the principal reception-room of the building.* I will acknowledge the same sort of surprise that I felt at the Castle Garden fête, at find-

* The people furnish the entire house. It is the practice to make a moderate appropriation for that purpose, at the accession of each new President.

ing the assemblage so respectable, in air, dress, and deportment. Determined to know exactly in what view to consider this ceremony, I gave my companion no peace until every thing was explained.

The "evening" at the White House, or the drawing-room, as it is sometimes pleasantly called, is in fact a collection of all classes of people who choose to go to the trouble and expense of appearing in dresses suited to an ordinary evening party. I am not sure that even dress is much regarded; for I certainly saw a good many men there in boots. The females were all neatly and properly attired, though few were ornamented with jewelry. Of course the poorer and labouring classes of the community would find little or no pleasure in such a scene. They consequently stay away. The infamous, if known, would not be admitted: for it is a peculiar consequence of the high tone of morals in this country, that grave and notorious offenders rarely presume to violate the public feeling by invading society. Perhaps if Washington were a large town, the "evenings" could not exist; but as it is, no inconvenience is experienced.

Squeezing through the crowd, we achieved a passage to a part of the room where Mrs. Monroe was standing, surrounded by a bevy of female friends. After making our bows here, we sought the President. The latter had posted himself at the top of the room, where he remained most of the evening, shaking hands with all who approached.* Near him stood all the Secretaries, and a great number of the most

* It is a mistaken opinion, however, that shaking hands is a custom not to be dispensed with in America. Most people practise it certainly, for it is thought to be a frank, manly, and, if you will, a republican usage. But in a certain class, it is not considered a mark of breeding to be too free with the hand, in casual introductions, Two gentlemen meeting would be apt to touch their hats (unless intimates) just as in Europe, though either of them would offer his hand to any one who he thought

distinguished men of the nation. Cadwallader pointed out the different judges, and several members of both houses of Congress, whose reputations were quite familiar to me. Individuals of importance from all parts of the Union were also here, and were employed in the manner usual to such scenes. Thus far the "evening" would have been like any other excessively crowded assembly; but while my eyes were roving over the different faces, they accidentally fell on one they knew. It was the master of an inn, in one of the larger towns. My friend and myself had passed a fortnight in his house. I pointed him out to Cadwallader, and I am afraid there was something like an European sneer in my manner as I did so.

"Yes, I have just shaken hands with him," returned my friend, coolly. "He keeps an excellent tavern, you must allow; and, what is more, had not that circumstance been the means of your making his acquaintance, you might have mistaken him for one of the magnates of the land. I understand your look, Count de ———, better than you understand the subject at which you are smiling. Fancy, for a moment, that this assembly were confined to a hundred or two, like those eminent men you see collected in that corner, and to these beautiful and remarkably delicate women you see standing near us; in what, except name, would it be inferior to the best collections of your side of the ocean? You need not apologize, for we understand one another perfectly. I know Europe rather better than you know America, for the simple reason, that one part of Europe is so much like another, that it is by no means an abstruse

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expected it. When an European, therefore, offers to shake hands with an American of breeding, unless on familiar terms, he mistakes the manners of the country. The natural feeling of gentlemanly reserve is the guide there, as it is with us.

study, so far as mere manners are concerned; whereas, in America, there exists a state of things that is entirely new. We will make the comparison, not in the way you are at this moment employed in doing, but in the way common sense dictates.

"It is very true that you meet here a great variety of people of very many conditions of life. This person you see on my left is a shopkeeper from New-York: no—not the one in black, but the genteel-looking man in blue—I dare say you took him for an *attaché* of one of the legations. And this lovely creature, who demeans herself with so much elegance and propriety, is the daughter of a mechanic of Baltimore. In this manner we might dissect half the company, perhaps; some being of better, and some of worse, exteriors. But what does it all prove? Not that the President of the United States is obliged to throw open his doors to the rabble, as you might be tempted to call it, for he is under no sort of obligation to open his doors to any body. But he chooses to see the world, and he must do one of two things. He must make invidious and difficult selections, which, in a public man, would excite just remarks in a government like ours, or he must run the hazard of remaining three or four hours in a room filled with a promiscuous assembly. He has wisely chosen the latter.

"What is the consequence? Your ears are not offended by improper discourse. Your individuality is not wounded by impertinence, nor even your taste annoyed by any very striking coarseness of manner. Now it appears to me, that every American should exult in this very exhibition. Not for the vulgar reason that it is a proof of the equality of our rights, for it is a mistake to think that society is a necessary dependant of government. In this respect the 'evenings' are some such deception as that ceremony one hears of in Europe, in which sovereigns wash the

feet of beggars. But he should exult that the house of his first magistrate can be thrown open to the world, and an assembly so well-behaved, so decent, so reasonable, so free alike from sheepishness and presumption, in short so completely creditable, in every point of view, is collected by the liberty. Open the doors of one of your palaces in this manner, and let us see what would be the character of the company.

"There is a good sense in our community, which removes all dangers of unpleasant consequences from too much familiarity. It imposes the necessity on him who would be thought a gentleman, of being circumspect and reasonable, but it leaves him sufficiently the master of all his movements and associations. The seeming scarcity of high-bred men in this country, compared with the number one sees in Europe, is much less owing to our form of government, than the fact that they are so widely scattered. Quite half, too, of what is called fastidious breeding, is purely conventional, and, to make conventions, men must meet.

"I have known a cartman leave his horse in the street, and go into a reception-room to shake hands with the President. He offended the good sense of all present, because it was not thought decent that a labourer should come in a dirty dress on such an occasion; but while he made a trifling mistake in this particular, he proved how well he understood the difference between government and society. He knew the levee was a sort of homage paid to political equality in the person of the first magistrate, but he would not have presumed to enter the house of the same person as a private individual without being invited, or without a reasonable excuse in the way of business.

"There are, no doubt, individuals who mistake the character of these assemblies, but the great ma-

jority do not. They are simply a periodical acknowledgment, that there is no legal barrier to the advancement of any one to the first association in the Union. You perceive there are no masters of ceremonies, no ushers, no announcing, nor indeed any let or hindrance to the ingress of all who please to come; and yet how few, in comparison to the whole number who might enter, do actually appear. If there is any man, in Washington, so dull as to suppose equality means a right to thrust himself into any company he pleases, it is probable he satisfies his vanity by boasting that he can go to the White House once a fortnight as well as a governor or any body else. You will confess his pride is appeased at a cheap rate. Any prince can collect a well-dressed and well-behaved crowd by calling his nobles around him; but I fancy the President of the United States is the only head of a nation who need feel no apprehension of throwing open his doors to every body. Until you can show an assembly composed of similar materials, which shall equal this, not only in decency, but in ease and in general manners, you ought in reason to be content to confess your inferiority."

You will perceive the utter impossibility of having an opinion of your own, dear Jules, when a man is obstinately bent on considering things always in reference to common sense, instead of consulting the reverend usages which have been established by the world, whether founded on prejudice or not. So far as mere appearance goes, I must confess, however, my friend was not very wrong, since the company at the White House, on this occasion, was certainly as well-behaved, all things considered, as could be wished.

TO THE BARON VON KEMPERFELT,

&c. &c.

Washington, ———

WASHINGTON, as it contains all the public offices is the best place to ascertain the general statistical facts connected with the condition of this country. I have hitherto purposely avoided touching on the marine of the United States, until I should have an opportunity of getting the information necessary to do it justice. On no occasion, however, have I neglected to examine the ships and the navy-yards as I passed through the seaports, though I have reserved all my remarks until I had something material to communicate. It is my intention to dispose of the subject altogether in this letter.

Until the period of the war which separated the two countries, the American mariners performed most of their military service in the navy of Great Britain. The history of the colonies, however, is not altogether destitute of nautical incidents, that were rather remarkable for skill and enterprise. The privateers of this hemisphere were always conspicuous in the colonial contests; and they were then, as they have always been since, of a character for order and chivalry that ought not to be too confidently expected from a class of adventurers who professedly take up arms for an object so little justifiable, and perhaps so ignoble, as gain. But men of a stamp altogether superior to the privateersmen of Europe were induced, by the peculiar situation of their country, to embark in these doubtful military enterprises in America. There was no regular service in which to show their martial qualities; and

those among them who felt a longing for the hazards and adventures of naval warfare, were obliged to hoist these semi-chivalrous flags, or to stay at home. Still, unless very wrongly informed, it was much the fashion for the gentry of the colonies to place their sons in the navy of the mother country; and many distinguished names, in the higher ranks of the British marine at this day, have been pointed out to me in corroboration of the circumstance. It is generally believed that Washington himself was destined to such a life, and that nothing but the unconquerable reluctance of a tender mother prevented him from figuring in a very different character from that which he was afterwards enabled to enact with so much usefulness and true glory.

The first evidences of a nautical enterprise, on an extended scale, that I can discover in the history of these people, are contained in the accounts of the expedition against Louisbourg. The States of New-England, or rather Massachusetts alone, undertook to reduce that important fortress during the war of 1745. A considerable naval armament accompanied the expedition, which was successful, though it contained no ship of a force sufficient to combat with the heavier vessels of their enemy. Still it manifested a disposition to the sort of warfare of which I am writing, more especially as the mother country not only possessed a squadron near, but actually employed it in the service. A people whose maritime propensities were less strong might have been content to have thrown the whole of this branch of the undertaking on an ally that was so well qualified to discharge the duty with credit.

At the commencement of the struggle for independence, notwithstanding the overwhelming force of their enemy, the Americans early showed the new flag on the ocean. Almost any other people of the world, under similar circumstances, would have re-

tired into their valleys and fastnesses; but the privateers and public cruisers of America, while the divided and feeble population at home were struggling daily for their political existence, continued, during the whole of that war, to carry hostilities even to the shores of Great Britain. Had the government of the country even wished to husband its resources for domestic defence, it is more than probable it would have been found that it did not possess sufficient authority to repress the nautical temper of the country. It acted a wiser part. Although a more hopeless adventure could not apparently be conceived, than for these infant States to contend against the overwhelming power of England on the ocean, yet the new government early directed a considerable portion of its scanty means to that object. Nor was the desperate adventure without its benefits. It served to make the nations of Europe more familiarly acquainted with the power that was struggling into existence, and it afforded an additional pledge of its final success, by furnishing visible evidence of the possession of an enterprise that merited confidence and support. Though the marine of the United States, in the war of the revolution, was imperfectly organized, and exceedingly weak, the spirit of their seamen was often exhibited in a manner to show that the nation possessed an extraordinary aptitude to that particular species of service. Their discipline was not, nor could not well be, better than that ordinarily observed on board of private vessels of war, since the ships were of necessity officered by men taken from the trading vessels of the country; still the battles of that period were often bloody and severe, and were frequently attended with a signal and brilliant success.

At the peace of '83, the half-formed and imperfect marine of the country disappeared. The confederation, as it then existed, did not admit, without an important object, of the exercise of a power that

involved so serious an expense as its maintenance. Each State, at that time, collected its own imposts, and imposed its own taxes. A few schooners, for the security of the revenue, were kept in some of the larger seaports; but of a navy, either in officers or ships, there was postively none.

When the constitution of the country, as it now exists, was adopted (in 1789), Washington was placed at the head of the country, filling, for the first time, its highest civil station. He recommended the construction of a few frigates, in order to protect its commerce against the depredations of the Barbary powers, who were then in the fullest practice of those lawless robberies which were so long the scourge and disgrace of the civilized world. This recommendation was the foundation of the present navy of the United States. Though, so far as the Algerines themselves were concerned, a war actually existed, no cruizer of this country took part in its operations. According to the fashion of that day, peace was soon *purchased.* But the capture of a few of their unarmed merchantmen had served to apprize the Americans of the absolute necessity of a marine to protect their rights as a commercial community.

This little affair was scarcely adjusted before a misunderstanding occurred between the French and American republics. A sort of armed neutrality was attempted by the latter; but, though no declaration of war was ever actually made, it soon terminated in open hostilities. It was now thought prudent to extend a still greater protection to the commerce of the country, and a sudden and considerable increase to the navy was made. In order to effect this purpose, it became necessary to build or to purchase ships, and to procure officers. Vessels were both bought and constructed, and seamen of various degrees of character were induced to abandon the peaceful for the more warlike pursuits of their profession. A small

corps of officers had been chosen to command the first half-dozen frigates from among the veterans who still survived the great struggle for independence; but this was a body soon exhausted, especially as it was found necessary that a rigid selection should be observed. To supply the deficiencies, spirited and skilful young men were sought among the masters and the mates of the merchantmen. A mixed marine was by these means created, though it is scarcely possible not to believe that in ships and commanders there must have existed the utmost inequality of merit and of fitness for the duty required of both. Still, as the propensity of the nation is so decidedly maritime, the war proved creditable. Many battles were fought, and with a success that was invariable.

This maritime war occurred during the presidency of Mr. Adams. The creation of a navy was thought to be a favourite measure of his policy; and as opposition grew warm, the wisdom of so early and so considerable an expenditure of the public money was much disputed. Men who admitted that nature and reason both pointed to the ocean as the place where the rights of the nation were to be maintained, still affirmed that the measure was premature. The country was involved in a heavy debt, and the very means that were resorted to, in order to protect the wealth of the country, might induce quarrels which would inevitably involve its loss. But this reasoning did not immediately prevail, as the administration contrived to keep its majorities in the two houses until near the close of its constitutional period of service.

In the midst of these disputes, the grave determination of the country is to be traced in its permanent legislative enactments. In 1798, a navy department was created, and its Secretary was admitted to a seat in the cabinet. Notwithstanding the clamour which had been raised by the opposition against the marine,

when the power passed into their hands no very serious blow was meditated or practised against its positive existence. So much had been said on the subject of economy, that some reduction became necessary. Perhaps in the peculiar circumstances under which the officers and ships had been collected, it was prudent. The vessels, which had been purchased to meet the emergency, were therefore sold, and by far the greater part of the officers were discharged.

At one time, during the disturbance with France, near sixty public cruisers were employed on the American coast, or in the West Indies, under the flag of the republic. Most of them were merchantmen that had been purchased and altered to suit their new destination, and many that were expressly built, had been constructed in a hurry, and of course imperfectly. Of the officers it is unnecessary to say more than that they embraced, perhaps, the very best and the very worst men of their class. Most of these vessels were small, the largest only rating 44, and actually mounting 54 guns. The majority were clumsy sloops, carrying between 16 and 24 guns.

Now that the heat of opposition has passed away, the best-informed men candidly admit that there was but little inducement to retain officers or ships so promiscuously and so hurriedly assembled. Notwithstanding its apparent hostility, the new government, while reducing the service, was rather disposed to cherish a good and efficient marine than to destroy it.

In 1801, an act was passed, creating a naval peace establishment. This was the law which gave form and permanent existence to the present marine of the country.

By the act of 1801, the number of the ships was reduced to nine frigates, of various sizes, with a few smaller vessels. A sufficient number of officers was retained for their command. From that hour to this,

the corps has never been reduced in the slightest manner, though the army has been the subject of repeated increases and of as frequent reductions. The boy who now enters the navy a midshipman, enters it with a conviction that, should he behave with prudence and spirit, he has a highly creditable employment for life.

The partial reduction of 1801, gave the marine department an opportunity of making a selection among the officers, as well as among the ships. Personal interest, apart from personal merit, could have no great influence on the movements of this government, especially in a case of so great notoriety as that of a choice between officers of any rank. The captains retained were men of character and experience; and it is probable that a finer corps of inferior naval officers, than those who were retained on this occasion, never had an existence.

In 1803, the bashaw of Tripoli commenced hostilities against the republic. Different squadrons were sent into the Mediterranean to oppose the depredations. His corsairs were driven from the sea, and his town was blockaded. From watchfulness, the Americans soon proceeded to attacks, until the slumbers of the Africans were almost nightly broken by the assaults of their weak but spirited foes. The history of this war, in miniature, is remarkable for its romantic incidents, and for the high daring of the actors. A few light cruizers, with a dozen gun-boats, and a couple of ketches, backed by a single frigate, would often lie for hours under the batteries and shipping of the town, throwing their shot even into the palace of the barbarian. On several occasions the conflicts were still more serious. Battles were fought in closest personal collision; officers and men, Christian and Turk, struggling fiercely for the victory, hand to hand. It was to commemorate the names of the brave youths who fell in these sanguinary

struggles, that the little monument, already named, was erected in the Navy-Yard at Washington.

The war with Tripoli was also distinguished by an enterprise that was as remarkable for its conception, as for the spirit and skill with which it was conducted. The reigning bashaw of Tripoli was an usurper, having, some years before, expelled his brother from the throne. The banished prince had sought a refuge among the Arabs of the desert in Upper Egypt. The American consul to the regency of Algiers, was a person of the name of Eaton. This gentleman had once been a captain in the army of the Union. He was a man distinguished for his reckless courage and for a restless enterprise. During the time the squadron of his country was employed in harassing the town of their enemy, Mr. Eaton, accompanied by two or three officers of the navy, sought out the exiled bashaw in the desert, and induced him to lend himself to an attempt to recover his throne. A force, consisting of Arabs, Turks, Christians, and of adventurers from all countries, was soon assembled. It entered the territories of Tripoli by its eastern frontier, and advanced rapidly upon Derne, the second town of the principality. Here it was met and sustained by a few light cruizers from the American squadron. A sharp skirmish was fought in the vicinity of the town, and the place was carried. A crisis was evidently at hand. There was every prospect of complete success to this chivalrous undertaking, when the whole enterprise was defeated by an event as mortifying as it was unexpected. A negotiator had just before arrived from America; conceiving it to be his duty to terminate the war, he profited by the terror excited in the bosom of the reigning bashaw, by the success of his brother, and signed a treaty of peace. But for this premature occurrence, the world would probably have witnessed the singular spectacle of a power of the western hemisphere commencing

thus early the work of retaliation, by setting up and pulling down dynasties of the eastern.

The navy of the United States owes most of its discipline, and of its high reputation for spirit and enterprise, aided by the ambitious natural character of the people, to the experience it obtained in the war with Tripoli. The young men (chiefly of the best families of the country), who had commenced their military career in the affair with France, received their commissions during, or at the close of this war; and they brought with them into the higher ranks of the service, the feelings and habits so necessary to their class. Officers were now first seen in the command of vessels, who had regularly risen from the lowest ranks of the service.

From the time of the peace with Tripoli to that of the war of England, the navy was employed in guarding the coast, and in aiding to enforce the restrictive laws of the country. A few light vessels were built, and a plan of defending the seaports, in the event of need, by gun-boats, grew into favour. The American naval officers say, that the latter scheme had nearly proved fatal to the tone and discipline of their service. It was, however, of short duration, and the subsequent hostilities completely proved its fallacy.*

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* Many absurd statements, concerning the organization of the American navy, have been circulated in Europe. There is none more false or more foolish than the story that young mates of merchantmen are, or ever have been, taken for the first steps in the service. Boys, between the ages of twelve and eighteen, receive the appointments of midshipmen, and after having served a certain number of years, they are examined for lieutenants. These examinations are very rigid, and they are conducted with the greatest impartiality. While the writer was in America, he formed an intimacy with the commander of a frigate. One day at Washington, he entered the room of the captain, just as a naval officer of high rank was quitting it. "You met one of the commissioners at the door," said the writer's acquaintance; "he has been to beg I would make his son, who is just ordered to my

In 1812, the marine of the United States existed rather as the *nucleus* of a future service, than as a force to be directed to any of the more important objects of warfare. It was sufficient to keep alive the spirit, and to gratify the pride of the nation, but not to produce any serious result on the great objects of the struggle. So far as I can discover, the whole

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ship, mind his books. They tell me the young fellow is clever enough, and a very good sailor, but he has been twice defeated in trying to get through with his mathematics, because he will not study." In what other navy would the son of a lord of the admiralty lose his commission, in two examinations, for want of a little mathematics?

The most severe system of examination, not only into professional qualifications, but into moral character, is now rigidly observed in the American army and navy. The lower ranks of both branches of their service, are admirably filled. Midshipmen, instead of being taken from the merchant service, have been often taken from the service, under furloughs, to command merchant-ships. No man in the world is more jealous of his rank, than the American navy or army officer. It would far exceed the power of the President to push his own son an inch beyond the steps he is entitled to by his age and service. The Senate would refuse to approve of such a nomination. The same impartiality is observed in respect to commands. A captain, or commander, is not only sure of getting a ship, when his turn comes, but he must have an excellent excuse or he will be made to take one. Both establishments are kept within reasonable bounds, and promotions are slow and wary. There is not a single officer necessarily on half-pay, either in the land or sea service. There is not now, nor has there been for twenty years, an officer in the American navy, in command of a ship, the four or five oldest excepted, who did not regularly enter the marine as a midshipman. Even the oldest entered as low as a lieutenant, quite thirty years ago. A Secretary of the Navy, during the war of 1812, is said to have wished to introduce a brother from the merchant service, by giving him the command of a cartel, but entirely without success. Some six or eight clever men, who entered as sailing-masters, a class generally taken from the merchant service, have been so successful as to get commissions, a favour a little out of course, though sometimes practised to reward merit. Several of these, even, were midshipmen who had resigned, and had re-entered as masters, in the war, because they thought themselves too old to begin anew as midshipmen.

navy of the country, at that time, consisted of the following ships: three frigates, rating forty-four guns each, and fighting fifty-four; three, rating thirty-six, and fighting fifty; one, rating thirty-two, and fighting forty-two, or forty-four; two, rating twenty-four, and fighting twenty-four or twenty-six; and eight or ten sloops and schooners carrying from ten to twenty guns. There were three or four more frigates of no great force: but they were rotten, and never employed. Perhaps the whole marine might have included twenty cruizers of all sizes. The events of that period are so recent as to be sufficiently known. The war has, however, given a new impulse to the marine of this country, and one which will probably lead to the introduction of its fleets into the future contests of Christendom.

The English are said to have employed more than a hundred sail of cruizers on the coast of the United States, between the years 1813 and 1815. Whatever might have been the intentions of the British government, it is very certain that much useless annoyance was given to peaceful people by the depredations of some of these vessels. Even the expeditions which were attempted on a larger scale, argued a great ignorance of the character of this nation, since they exhibited a very mistaken application of force to attain what the world has every reason to believe was the object of the assailants.

It is fair to presume that the English commanders had determined to harass the country, with a view to bring the war as near as possible to each man's door. Now, it so happens, that, notwithstanding the large bays and deep rivers of this continent enabled those who had command of the water, to do a great deal of injury, their attacks did not, nor could not, produce the least effect on the mass of the nation. Harassing expeditions, and burnings, and alarms, might serve to exasperate, but in no degree did they serve to subdue.

They often wounded the pride, and excited the indignation of the Americans, without in the slightest degree enfeebling their power. A government like this is weak, or strong, for all offensive purposes, exactly in the proportion that its efforts are popular. It is well known that a serious opposition to the war with England existed in the country from its commencement to its close. But it is just as well known, that these very acts of exasperating hostility had begun to shut the mouths of the friends of England, while they permitted her enemies to declaim the louder. Had the contest continued another year, it is probable it would have afforded a very different scene. The American government, strengthened by the blunder, and excited by the inroads of its enemy, was seriously turning its attention to the work of retaliation. When peace was unexpectedly announced, two squadrons of fast-sailing schooners, bought for the purpose, were about to sail with orders to burn, ravage, and destroy. The firebrand would have gleamed on the island of Great Britain itself; and God only knows what horrid character the war would have next assumed. All experience shows that this is a nation, however patient and enduring it may seem under contumely and aggression, which knows how to rise in its anger, and to make itself dreaded even by the strongest.

But the chief and the most lasting effect of the British policy, during the war of 1814, has been to bring a respectable American marine into a sudden existence. This truth is proved by the fact, that the Congress, which, in these matters, takes most of its impulses from the people, exhibited the extraordinary policy of increasing, instead of reducing, its armaments with the peace. The whole nation saw and felt the necessity of protecting their coast, and the friends of the navy have seized the happy moment to interweave the policy with their institutions, in such

a manner as to render them henceforth inseparable. That they ought to be inseparable, every man, in the least familiar with the interests of this country, can see; but it was a great point gained to induce a people so wary of expenditure, to incur the cost of a marine, without an immediate demand for its use. *You* need not be told, that without a service in peace a service in war is next to useless, since experience, method, and even the high spirit necessary to continued military success, are all the fruits of time. But economical legislators, who count nothing but the present cost, are not always so sagacious.

While passing rapidly over this subject, it may be well to mention the little incident of the last war with Algiers, since it serves to show the spirit with which these people will enter on all similar enterprises, when a little more age shall give maturity and strength to their efforts. The barbarians had seized the opportunity of the British war to commit depredations on the American commerce. No sooner was the peace of 1815 ratified, than Congress issued a solemn declaration of war against the regency. A squadron immediately sailed for the Mediterranean. It crossed the Atlantic; passed the Straits; routed and destroyed the marine of their foe; carried the war to the mouth of his harbour; and, in six weeks from the day of sailing, it dictated an honourable and lasting peace, under the cannon of the city. Ten years before, it had sued for disgraceful terms from an inferior power of Barbary. This was the first treaty, I believe, in which the right to lead prisoners into slavery was formally disavowed by any of the African states.

During the war with England, several laws were passed, empowering the President to add to the marine. In 1813, four vessels of a force *not less* than seventy-four guns, and six frigates of a force *not less* than forty-four guns, were authorized. Squadrons

were constructed on the lakes, and sloops of war, of various sizes, were built, from time to time. In 1816 the Act "for the gradual increase of the Navy of the United States" was passed. By the provisions of this law, eight additional ships of the line, of *not less* than seventy-four guns, and nine additional frigates of *not less** than forty-four guns, were commanded. The President was instructed to procure the timber of three more steam-batteries, which were to be put in such a state as to admit of their soonest possible construction in time of need. As the object of this force was to anticipate the emergency of any future war, a sum of one million of dollars was appropriated annually, in order to procure the timber, and to insure the best and most desirable construction. In 1822, this law was altered, so as to extend the time, and to reduce the annual appropriation one-half.

Various other laws were passed, affecting the interests of the navy. Some were for the improvement of the officers; others for the preservation of the live-oak, the inestimable material always employed in the construction of a valuable American ship. So minute and cautious was the interest taken in the service, that a law was even passed to regulate the manner in which the vessels were to be named. A ship of the line was to be called after a State; the frigates, after rivers; and the sloops, after the larger towns. The vessels authorized by the last law are now all on the stocks, or they have been already launched.†

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* Congress often gives discretionary power to the President, limiting its exercise in this manner. From this practice has arisen the mistake that the Americans mean to call three-deckers seventy-fours.

† While the writer was in the country, a law was passed to build ten additional sloops of war, and a frigate was bought that had been constructed for the Greeks. Since he has left America, another law has been passed, appropriating half a mil-

The actual naval force of this country afloat, or which might be put afloat in the course of a few weeks, is nearly as follows: one first-rate; eight second ditto, first class, and three ditto of second class; nine third-rates, first class, and three ditto of second class; and sixteen corvettes and sloops of war. To these must be added a few schooners and light vessels, whose number is constantly varying. The materials of one forty-four are also prepared, but, in consequence of the purchase of a frigate, her construction is temporarily delayed. There appears to be no use in urging the building of these vessels, which are all the better for delay, and which are only launched as they are wanted for experiments, or for actual service. Perhaps we may call the force at instant command, or which might be fitted before the crews could be assembled, at fifty sail, of all sizes.* This excludes the vessels on the lakes, the whole of which were sold by a law of 1825, except two ships of the line (on the stocks) on Lake Ontario. I exclude all vessels that are not actually intended to go to sea. If there is any error, it is in the very smallest vessels, whose number, as I have already said, is con-

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lion of dollars annually, for six years, for the purpose of purchasing the materials for vessels of the different classes already known in the service. By the report of the commissioners, it seems that contracts have actually been made for the frames of five sail of the line, five frigates, and five sloops, all of the first class. Two dry docks are, also, now in the course of construction, and a third is much urged in Congress. A new navy-yard has also been established in the Gulf of Mexico. A naval academy is pressed by the government. He believes these are the principal measures taken since the year 1826.

* To these must shortly be added, the vessels whose frames and materials are now in the course of collection. The rapid manner in which the Americans run up a ship at need, is well known. It is clear, that when the materials shall be in readiness, their force could easily be increased to near or quite seventy sail, small vessels included.

stantly varying, by shipwrecks, sales, and re-constructions.

With what force the Americans would absolutely put to sea, in the event of an immediate war, that should call for all their energy, might be difficult to anticipate. This government is at once both the strongest and the weakest in the world. It is weak compared to its wealth and physical means, in all cases of ordinary offensive operations, precisely as other governments are weak or strong in proportion to the absolute nature of the power they wield. But in a popular war, when power shall be conceded freely to the executive, it is so much the stronger as the government is assured of a cordial and enthusiastic support. I think the power of the United States, in actual warfare, will always be found to be exactly in proportion to the greater or less degree of cordiality with which the mass of the people shall enter into the views of the administration. The present navy of the United States would be formidable under any circumstances, to all second-rate maritime powers, since the skill and enterprise of its officers, aided by such legal support as a majority could always command, would at all times enable them to act with sufficient energy out of the country. I think also, in the event of a war, clearly defensive, with any of the greater powers, it would be unwise to calculate on having less than the whole of the marine to oppose, and that instantly. But we may form a better opinion of these matters by going a little into detail.

It would require about 20,000 men, to man the whole of the present marine of this country. This may sound large to your ears, but it is necessary to remember how very large a proportion of the estimated fifty sail are vessels of great size. Of this number more than one thousand would be those officers, who are always retained as a regular and durable part of the service. The fifty sail will carry, as near

as I can discover, about 2,500 guns. It is a rule to put one marine to each gun. This proportion, including officers, non-commissioned officers, music, &c., would make a corps of troops of, we will say, 2,500. For petty officers and seamen 10,000 would be a very liberal allowance, leaving a deficiency of 6,500 to be composed of ordinary seamen, landsmen and boys. These calculations may not be critically exact, but I think that they are near enough to the truth to answer the present object.

I think it can scarcely be doubted that the United States possess 30,000 men, sufficiently skilful to be rated as seamen, on board a vessel of war. If this be admitted, the question is reduced to the inquiry, of whether she can induce one-third of her seamen to serve in her navy.

The plenty or scarcity of mariners in the United States, is altogether a matter of demand and supply. There is clearly no surplus population to beg employment; and there is also a general aptitude among the natives, that enables them to gain their living in more ways than one. A seaman is a sort of artisan; and he requires rather higher wages than the labourer on shore, as a reward for his peculiar skill, and a compensation for his greater privation. It is a peculiarity of this country, that sailors, especially in New-York, and in all the Eastern States, are often found on land; not begging their bread, or sweeping the streets, but engaged in some creditable employment that gives them support. To meet any extraordinary demand, these men commonly return to the sea. Such of them as are impatient of a monotonous life, and who are unwilling to serve for reduced wages, as is at present the case, seek employment elsewhere. The public and private cruizers of the South American States, abound with such adventurers.

Now, it is rather a striking feature in the character

of the lower orders of the Americans, that they rarely lose their native attachments. They have a great and fixed contempt for all monarchies. It is necessary to overcome a principle that has settled into a prejudice, in order to make them respect any sort of government but a republic. Money will buy them, no doubt, but they require to be bought. They are not accidents on the surface of society that are willing to float, like most other mariners, whither the current shall carry them, but they are men who can only find the opinions which lie at the root of all their habits, in their native land. Unlike the subject of any other system on earth, the American, who is unfortunate, can lay no part of his calamity to his country. He was not born in a region where climate, or monopoly, or excessive population, or any other adverse cause, presses him of necessity to the earth. He retains in all situations a respect, a love, and frequently a longing, for the place of his birth. With money and opportunity, America might procure thousands of every nation in Europe to serve in any cause; but it may be questioned if this whole country furnishes one hundred men base enough to enlist in positive warfare against its institutions or rights. It is a consequence of this feeling, that the United States are more sure than other powers of retaining to themselves that portion of their population, which has taken to the sea for a livelihood.

These feelings would recall, and have recalled, the American sailor home, in the moment of hostilities; a time when the mariners of other nations seek opportunities of going abroad. He is not afraid to stand, at any time, on his native soil, for he knows that there is a law for him as well as for other men. Though he may be the perfect master of his own movements, a sailor is eminently a social creature. He is ever inclined, as you know by experience, to follow a general impulse. I am of opinion that in a popu-

lar war, the naval rendezvous of this country would be thronged; though it is certainly easy to conceive circumstances in which it would be difficult to procure men.

In the war of 1798–9, crews were often got for frigates in a single day. There were two reasons for this abundance of men. Privateers were not profitable against the trade of France, and the conflict was particularly in unison with the feelings of all nautical men. In the war with England, there was sometimes a momentary difficulty in filling a crew; but then privateers abounded. There was also another reason why seamen were reluctant to enter the national cruizers, during the war with England: crews were often transferred, in gross, from the seaboard to the lakes. The latter was a service in bad odour. There was no prize-money, nor did it at all accord with the prejudices of a tar, to be running in and out of a port on a great fresh-water pond. Still, near the close of that war, though the services of a great number of men were lost to the country, by being captured in privateers, I am told, that such crews were rarely known in the marine of any nation, as then began freely to offer themselves.

These are familiar reasons that must have a greater or less bearing on the facility of procuring seamen for th public service in the United States. The influence of a popular impulse can scarcely be estimated; though it is quite within the reach of probability that it should be exceedingly great. There are also other influences, which might be very powerful in producing a ready supply of men. A war would be declared, either when many merchant-ships were at sea, or when they were not. In the former case the whole mercantile community would feel a direct and powerful interest in manning their fleets; and in the latter, seamen would be out of employ. Then, the government could at all times create a monopoly

in its own favour, by refusing to grant private commissions, or even by imposing an embargo. The former has never yet been done, because it was the policy of the country to encourage privateers, since, heretofore, they have had no other very efficient means of annoying their enemy.

On the whole, I incline to the opinion, that the fifty sail, which this country now possesses, could be manned, in a reasonable time, without resorting to any extraordinary means of inducing the men to enter. Still, in a country like this, so much depends on the particular impulses of the day, that it is a question which will admit of dispute. A situation of things might be imagined in which a ship of the line would readily get a crew in a day, and then, again, circumstances might easily occur that would render enlistments tardy and reluctant. This is always supposing the supply to be left to the ordinary operations of trade, or to the influences of popular excitement. For the purpose of any long-continued and serious naval service, the government has in reserve most of the ordinary resources of other nations.

Although impressment is not, ought not to be, nor probably ever will be tolerated in the United States, a naval draft would be perfectly just; and if it be not now, it might easily be made constitutional. As the law stands, a seaman is exempted from all military duty, because it is the policy of the country to encourage its commerce. But there is clearly no reason in natural justice why a sailor should not risk his life in defence of the rights of his fellow-citizens as well as a landsman. This point being admitted, it is both more politic and more humane that he should perform the duty on an element to which he is accustomed, and in a service that he understands, than by doing violence to his habits by becoming a soldier. There are a variety of ways in which the government of the United States might even now, with per-

fect legality, place most of the seamen, which actually exist in the country, more or less at its own disposal, I have already mentioned an embargo as one powerful means of manning a fleet.

It is not an exaggerated estimate to suppose that, shortly after the commencement of the war with England, 10,000 men were serving in the American privateers. This number alone, added to the crews in the regular service at the same period, would more than man the whole of the present force of the country. There can be no doubt that what the nation did with a population of 8,000,000, and a tonnage of 1,200,000, it could now do, with far greater facility, with a population of 12,000,000, and a tonnage of near 1,600,000.

In almost every war into which the United States can enter, their operations must, of necessity, be conducted on the water. Canada and Mexico excepted, they have no immediate neighbours on the land. But a war with Canada would be a war with England, and the experience of the contest of 1812, has taught the Americans, that neither their commerce nor their shores are safe in such a war without a marine. Their growing fleet owes its existence solely to this conviction. The present naval force of the country, compared to that which it possessed in 1812, is already as twenty to one: not in the actual number of the vessels, certainly, but in their size, and in their consequent ability to resist, or to attack. In 1812, the Americans could show but seven frigates, only three of which were of any magnitude, while now they might show a line of twenty-seven sail, the smallest vessel in which should be the largest vessel they possessed in 1812, and the largest a ship of six times the force of the latter. This change denotes, to say the least, a serious intention to protect themselves.

The situation of the United States calls for no very hasty, or over-jealous vigour, in military prepa-

ration. The people of the country know their unrivalled advantages. A war like that which England lately waged with France, a war of twenty years, would, if America were a party, be commenced with a nation of 12,000,000, and be ended with one of 20,000,000 of souls! In the security of their remote position, and of their rapidly increasing strength, the people of this country are in no hurry to spend their money. Their actual fleet, instead of being a forced and premature establishment, is rather the result of inevitable circumstances. What nation before this was ever known to have 1,200,000 tons of shipping, with seven frigates and eight or ten small cruizers for its protection? It appears to me, that so far from considering the present maritime force of the United States as the utmost they can do, it ought to be considered rather as the result of what they cannot help doing. Money, skill, materials, pride, interest, and even necessity, unite to give birth to their fleets. The surprise should not be, that they are now creating a marine, but that they have so long neglected the duty. I am of opinion, that the past will be a guide for the future, in this respect. The United States may be driven to an exercise of their energies; but, if left to themselves, it will be found that all their military establishments will rather follow than lead the country. The natural order of things will accumulate the power of the republic quite fast enough for its own happiness, or for the peace of the world.

Until now the Americans have been tracing the outline of their great national picture. The work of filling up has just seriously commenced. The Gulf of Mexico, the Lakes of Canada, the Prairies, and the Atlantic, form the setting. They are now, in substance, a vast island, and the tide of emigration, which has so long been flowing westward, must have its reflux. Adventurers in the arts, in manufactures, in commerce, and in short, in every thing else, are al-

ready beginning to return from the western to the eastern borders. It is true that the force of the current is still toward the newer countries, but the time is near for those regions to give back some of their increase. Thousands of single men already find their way from Vermont, from the western counties of New-York and Pennsylvania, and from even Ohio, to the sea-shores, as labourers and traders. Population is becoming dense, and as it accumulates it will acquire the energy of a concentrated force.

Although ages must elapse before necessity shall drive man to beggary, or to abject dependence, in the United States, the time for a more regular increase of the people over the whole surface has commenced. It is true, that large districts still remain empty; but a variety of causes has, in the first place, a tendency to retard their settlement, and, in the second place, it must be remembered how much sooner 12,000,000 can fill a vacuum than 4,000,000.

The people of the older States are getting a taste for the arts and comforts of life, that disinclines vast numbers to encounter the privations of the forest. New-England, the great hive of emigrants, was a comparatively sterile and unfavoured region; and, twenty years ago, it possessed few other employments than those of husbandry. But climate, richness of soil, and moral considerations included, the more eligible parts of the country are now occupied. The emigrant (of 1790, and of 1800) to New-York or to Ohio, returned with accounts of advantages to which the inhabitant of Massachusetts or Connecticut was a stranger; but the emigrant to Illinois, to Indiana, to Kentucky, or to Missouri, is apt to pine for things that he has left behind him. Manufactures, and the thousand additional pursuits of a growing wealth, are beginning to chain men to their birth-places. The effects are already to be traced in the returns of the population.

New-York has been what is termed an emigrating State, these twenty years, and yet her population has increased near 18 per cent. within the last five.*

Although the supply of seamen must, for many years, be limited to the demand, since men can find support in other employments, the government can at any time create a demand of its own, in order to keep up the number necessary for the two services—viz. the navy and that of commerce. Hitherto no artificial means of creating seamen have been adopted. The government has as yet had no motive for such extraordinary care. They employ, in point of fact, only about twenty sail.† These vessels are manned by a very simple system, and with little or no difficulty. Rendezvous are opened in the different ports when men are needed; and, as they enter, they are placed on board of receiving vessels, where they continue until a draft is made for a crew. They pay no bounty, nor do the wages ever vary to meet the fluctuations in the price of seamen's wages in the merchantmen. The wages of a seaman are, however, something higher than those paid by any other nation to men in the public service.‡ When the ships are

* The births exceeded the deaths, in New-York, (1825) 38,840 souls; or at a rate that, notwithstanding emigration, would double its population once in forty years.

† The actual force of cruizers in commission (1828) is one ship of the line, six frigates, two corvettes, ten sloops, and four schooners. These vessels, including the ordinary, are manned by five thousand three hundred and eighteen men.

‡ A captain, commanding a ship of any force, receives 100 dollars a month, and eight rations a day; if he command a small ship, his pay is 75 dollars, and six rations. The pay of the other classes is as follows:—master commandant, 60 dollars, five rations; lieutenant commandant, 50 dollars and four rations; lieutenant, 40 dollars and three rations; master, 40 dollars and two rations; past-midshipman, 25 dollars and two rations; midshipman, 19 dollars and one ration; boatswain, gunner, sailmaker, and carpenter, 20 dollars and two rations; petty officers, 19 dollars and one ration; seaman, 12 dollars and one ration;

manned, orders are given to stop the enlistments. The supply varies, of course, a crew being sometimes obtained in a few days, and sometimes not in many weeks.

As the Americans add to the number of vessels employed in their service, they will, certainly, facilitate the means of a supply by increasing the demand. The great outlet to the rest of the world, the path of adventure, and the only, at least the principal, theatre for military achievements open to the people of this country, is on the ocean. It is only necessary to invite adventurers, to attract to their flag all, whom restlessness, ambition, misfortune, enterprise, or necessity, shall induce to wander.

The progress of the physical force of this country is not to be calculated by that of other nations. Independently of the gross amount of numbers, and the rate at which the population increases, there is another important fact to be considered in making all our estimates of the future power of this nation. When we say that America, with so many millions of people, has done this or that much, has furnished so many soldiers, or so many seamen, it is necessary to remark how very large a proportion of the population are of an age to be dependants, instead of actors. In 1820, 17.11 of the whole population were boys under ten years of age. Including girls, rather more than one-third of the population had not yet reached that tender

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ordinary ditto, 10 dollars and one ration; boys, 6 dollars and one ration; chaplain and purser, 40 dollars and two rations; surgeon, 50 dollars and two rations; surgeon's mate, 30 dollars and two rations; captain of marines, 40 dollars and two rations; first lieutenant ditto, 30 dollars and two rations; second ditto, 25 dollars and three rations, &c. &c. The rations of all the officers are paid in money, if required, at the rate of 25 cents a day for each, except the marines, who receive army pay and allowances. An army ration is worth 20 cents a day. It is, however, intended to increase the pay of most of the officers. See note B. at the end of the volume.

period of life. So far, therefore, from being assistants, they had been clogs to the exertions of their parents. Of 7,856,269 whites in the country at the census of 1820, 3,840,899 were under sixteen years of age. It is a natural fact that the commerce of the country should grow with its population; but it is evident that the ability to furnish a supply of men, for all purposes, must increase in an augmenting ratio. The proportion between whole numbers and active agents has not yet reached the level of Europe, and the American is, therefore, entitled to so much greater credit for what his country has done, since, even supposing other things equal, it has certainly been done, in consequence of this peculiarity, with a comparatively diminished force.

The United States would certainly take a new position in the event of another general war. So far from being again the prey of the belligerents, she would (unless an actor) be a neutral, whose weight, thrown into either scale, might make her a power to be dreaded on the ocean. England herself would find the fifty, or a hundred sail, which these people could, and, no doubt, would employ, highly embarrassing. The country, without preccocious, or unnatural efforts, has reached the point when it has become an important ally. The West India seas would even now lie greatly at her mercy, especially if England, or France, had enemies nearer home. In a very few years this republic will not be very wary as to its choice of a foe, and in yet a few more, it will be able to meet fearlessly the greatest power of the earth in any way that man can elect for the gratification of his lawless propensities.

Still I think that the government of the United States will not be very dangerous by its ambition. That it will sweep its coasts of every hostile hold; that Bermuda, and all such places, will come into the possession of the Americans in the course of the

next half century, no man can doubt, who has seen how sagaciously they have already arranged their frontiers, and who knows how to estimate their growing strength. In fifty years it is physically certain that these States will contain fifty millions of souls. This number, supposing that the present marine should increase only in a numerical proportion, would give them a navy of rather more than two hundred sail, of which one hundred and twenty would carry more than fifty-four guns. With an empire, compact, natural, and so constituted as to require no artificial defence, this alone would be a more available force than three times the number employed in protecting distant colonies and divided interests. The game which England has played with America, in their two wars, by striking at the weak and most exposed points, America will be able to play with England, in the course of the next twenty years. It would be too dangerous an experiment to lie in her rivers and bays, even now, with the advanced improvements in steam; and as to their ports, they will, shortly, be beyond aggression. The American citizen, a little drilled, is as good a soldier, in a fort, as any man in the world. The last war abundantly proved that no numbers can expel active and skilful seamen from the ocean; and any one can calculate what an efficient fleet of twenty sail might do against a divided empire. I know no more unsafe calculation than to rely on the inactivity of an American sailor.

But it is a well-known fact, that the force and wealth of nations are not so much in proportion to their numbers as to their advancement in the arts of life, and to their moral superiority. In every thing that constitutes general moral superiority, these people are already in the foremost rank. Their population is getting compact; and as manufactures increase, and the usual divisions of employments follow, they will become rich in a geometrical progression.

Should there be a necessity for such a force, there is far more probability that their marine will contain one thousand than two hundred sail in the year 1875.

Nor do I find a single plausible reason for disbelieving this result. Should a separation of the States occur, an event quite as improbable as any other act of suicide, and just as possible as all suicides, the commercial and manufacturing States would still keep together. I think, if any thing, their marine would be larger than if the confederation should exist as it now stands, since there would be but one opinion on its policy, and its size would clearly be a matter of greater necessity.

I know but one other material point to be considered in examining the American marine. With reference to its immediate growth, the finances of the country and the cost of ships are important. The debt of the United States is about 60,000,000 of dollars,* the revenue rather more than 21,000,000, without taxes. Including comparatively heavy sums paid to build fortifications, and a half million, each year, to the *increase* (not to the *repairs*) of the marine,† the whole expenditure is about 13,000,000 of dollars. This leaves an excess by which the debt will be entirely extinguished in a few more years of peace. A fair proportion of the moneys that shall then remain will, beyond a doubt, be used in fostering so interesting an arm of the public defence as the navy.

The American ships, considering their quality, are about as cheap as those of England. Some articles are less costly, others more expensive. I find that the Columbus, a ship on two decks, pierced for one

* It is actually 66,000,000, but the balance was created for the purchase of bank-stock, which pays an interest, and which can be sold without difficulty.

† This appropriation has been lately extended to six more years.—See note A. at the end of the volume.

hundred, and mounting about ninety-two or ninety-four guns, stands charged, nearly ready for sea, at 426,931 dollars; the North Carolina, launched, but not finished, at 343,251; Delaware ditto, at 375,735, and the Ohio* 308,000. The Potomac frigate was launched for 157,320 dollars, and the Brandywine, nearly completed for sea, for 261,876. The two latter are pierced for sixty guns, and actually mount fifty-six.†

Before closing this long, but I trust, to you, not tiresome, letter, I will allude to another topic. The Americans have been ignorantly and coarsely charged with deception on the subject of their navy. It has been said that they constructed vessels of extraordinary magnitude, and gave to them the appellations and rates of frigates. What is the fact? Frigates, as you very well know, were originally ships of one gun-deck, with a regular quarter-deck and forecastle, on both of which guns can be mounted. At first, the two latter decks were smaller than was necessary, and the frigates were rated at the precise number of guns that they carried. Thus a ship that formerly carried twenty-eight guns on her gun-deck, and ten guns on her quarter-deck and forecastle, was called, in the English navy, a thirty-eight. In course of time fourteen guns were placed on the quarter-deck of the same sort of ship (a little enlarged), and eight ports were cut in the forecastle, so that she could, and did, mount fifty guns. Some of them were even pierced

* In the state in which she was seen by Mr. De Roos, or nearly so.

† No American frigate, or ship of the line, with the exception of a 64 built for the Greeks, and recently *purchased* into the service, mounts, or has mounted, during the last five-and-twenty years, guns in the waist. The waists (since the last war) have been pierced for guns, in order that they may be shifted over to batter a town, or to defend a vessel at anchor, &c. &c. but hammocks are always stowed there as in other vessels of war.

for more. Between the frigates and the ships of the line was a sort of mongrel class that properly belonged to neither. They had the construction of the latter, though their force was but little superior to the former. These vessels were called fifties and forty-fours. When the Americans first formed their marine there was little method in its arrangement or classification. Ships like the English thirty-eights were commonly called thirty-sixes. But experience had shown that a larger-sized frigate might be built to advantage; and they were not disposed to perpetuate the mistaken notions of others. They constructed ships, on one deck, to carry thirty guns below (twenty-four pounders), and twenty-four guns on the quarter-deck and forecastle. But so far from attempting any deception in the manner of rating, they called them after the intermediate class already named, viz., forty-fours. Even the Chesapeake, the smallest thirty-eight (according to the English method of rating) ever known in their service, was, for a long time, through carelessness, or ignorance, termed a forty-four; because, at first, she actually mounted forty-four guns; while the New-York, a larger ship, though of fewer guns, was called a thirty-six. The Essex, a proper English thirty-two, was called a thirty-two; while the John Adams, and the Adams, both much inferior vessels, in size and in guns, were rated the same.

Now all these vessels were sent openly to sea, were visited freely, and were approved of or condemned by the officers of all the navies in the world. Some nations sneered at what the Americans deemed an improvement, and some imitated it. Time has shown that the latter were the wisest.

Deception is a word more unjustly applied to this nation than to any on earth. There is scarcely a secret even pretended to be kept in its whole government or police. Every year the fullest and most satis-

factory documents, concerning its army, its finances, and every thing else, are published to all who choose to read them. Their navy-yards and arsenals are open to every applicant. It is a singular fact that foreign officers have accused these people of a wish to practise deception, because they have discovered improvements in their navy-yards, while unreservedly enjoying, themselves, privileges that would, in their own countries, be denied to an American seaman. The officers of this country say that they are satisfied with the manner in which their own marine is conducted. If other people have a reason for changing their system of classification, let them do it, it is altogether an affair of their own. The object of rating at all is to understand the relative size and force of ships in the same service. It is not a matter of convention between nations. When an officer captures an enemy, or is captured by one, he is a fool if he does not state the actual force of his antagonist, he is only a knave when he conceals, or misrepresents it. Besides, they say, and justly enough, that the number of guns is no good criterion of the force of a vessel. An English thirty-two (old rate) and a thirty-six might, and often did, carry nearly the same number of guns (from forty to forty-four guns), but the latter is one-fourth larger, stronger, and heavier, and, of course, more formidable, than the former.*

That there was great inaccuracy in the rating of the American ships before and during the last war, is

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* A ship carrying eighteen twenty-four pound carronades, and a ship of eighteen thirty-two pound carronades, would be rated the same, if the number of guns were to be the only guide; whereas, if one should be called a sixteen, and the other an eighteen, the mind would conceive a sufficiently just idea of the difference in force which actually existed. There are so many considerations that properly enter into the estimate of force in a vessel, that no one of them all can be safely taken as a rule.

certain; but it is just as certain it was oftener against their reputation than in their favour. They had three large frigates, and these they honestly called by the rates of vessels which fifty years since fought in the line. It must be remembered these three vessels have been built thirty years. They oftener over than underrated their other frigates. The same was true of their sloops of war. The Argus, (brig,) for instance, a vessel a third lighter every way than the regular eighteen, was rated in that class. The Nautilus, Vixen, Ferret, &c., were also overrated.

No nautical man, fit to command a vessel, would trust to any rate but that of his own judgment. If any people have got into difficulty by undervaluing their enemies, it is far more manful to confess their mistake, than to call improvements, which they are eager to imitate, by so coarse a term as deception. In this manner, clever men are, without bounds or moderation, deceiving the rest of mankind daily.

TO THE ABBATE GIROMACHI,

&c. &c.

Washington, ———

You ask me to write freely on the subject of the literature and the arts of the United States. The subjects are so meagre as to render it a task that would require no small portion of the talents necessary to figure in either, in order to render them of interest. Still, as the request has come in so urgent a form, I shall endeavour to oblige you.

The Americans have been placed, as respects

moral and intellectual advancement, different from all other infant nations. They have never been without the wants of civilization, nor have they ever been entirely without the means of a supply. Thus pictures, and books, and statuary, and every thing else which appertains to elegant life, have always been known to them in an abundance, and of a quality exactly proportioned to their cost. Books, being the cheapest, and the nation having great leisure and prodigious zest for information, are not only the most common, as you will readily suppose, but they are probably more common than among any other people. I scarcely remember ever to have entered an American dwelling, however humble, without finding fewer or more books. As they form the most essential division of the subject, not only on account of their greater frequency, but on account of their far greater importance, I shall give them the first notice in this letter.

Unlike the progress of the two professions in the countries of our hemisphere, in America the printer came into existence before the author. Reprints of English works gave the first employment to the press. Then came almanacs, psalm-books, religious tracts, sermons, journals, political essays, and even rude attempts at poetry. All these preceded the revolution. The first journal was established in Boston at the commencement of the last century. There are several original polemical works of great originality and power that belong to the same period. I do not know that more learning and talents existed at that early day in the States of New-England than in Virginia, Maryland and the Carolinas, but there was certainly a stronger desire to exhibit them.

The colleges or universities, as they were somewhat prematurely called, date very far back in the brief history of the country. There is no stronger evidence of the intellectual character, or of the judi-

cious ambition of these people, than what this simple fact furnishes. Harvard College, now the university of Cambridge—(it better deserves the title at this day)—was founded in 1638; within less than *twenty years* after the landing of the first settlers in New-England! Yale (in Connecticut) was founded in 1701. Columbia (in the city of New-York) was founded in 1754. Nassau Hall (in New-Jersey) in 1738; and William and Mary (in Virginia) as far back as 1691. These are the oldest literary institutions in the United States, and all but the last are in flourishing conditions to the present hour. The first has given degrees to about five thousand graduates, and rarely has less than three hundred and fifty or four hundred students. Yale is about as well attended. The others contain from a hundred and fifty to two hundred under-graduates. But these are not a moiety of the present colleges, or universities, (as they all aspire to be called,) existing in the country. There is no State, except a few of the newest, without at least one, and several have two or three.

Less attention is paid to classical learning here than in Europe; and, as the term of residence rarely exceeds four years, profound scholars are by no means common. This country possesses neither the population nor the endowments to maintain a large class of learned idlers, in order that one man in a hundred may contribute a mite to the growing stock of general knowledge. There is a luxury in this expenditure of animal force, to which the Americans have not yet attained. The good is far too problematical and remote, and the expense of man too certain, to be prematurely sought. I have heard, I will confess, an American legislator quote Horace and Cicero; but it is far from being the humour of the country. I thought the taste of the orator questionable. A learned quotation is rarely of any use in an argument, since few men are fools enough not to see

that the application of any maxim to politics is liable to a thousand practical objections, and, nine times in ten, they are evidences of the want of a direct, natural, and vigorous train of thought. They are the affectations, but rarely the ebullitions of true talent. When a man feels strongly, or thinks strongly, or speaks strongly, he is just as apt to do it in his native tongue as he is to laugh when he is tickled, or to weep when in sorrow. The Americans are strong speakers and acute thinkers, but no great quoters of the morals and axioms of a heathen age, because they happen to be recorded in Latin.

The higher branches of learning are certainly on the advance in this country. The gentlemen of the middle and southern States, before the revolution, were very generally educated in Europe, and they were consequently, in this particular, like our own people. Those who came into life during the struggle, and shortly after, fared worse. Even the next generation had little to boast of in the way of instruction. I find that boys entered the colleges so late as the commencement of the present century, who had read a part of the Greek Testament, and a few books of Cicero and Virgil, with perhaps a little of Horace. But great changes have been made, and are still making, in the degree of previous qualification.

Still, it would be premature to say that there is any one of the American universities where classical knowledge, or even science, is profoundly attained, even at the present day. Some of the professors push their studies, for a life, certainly; and you well know, after all, that little short of a life, and a long one too, will make any man a good general scholar. In 1820, near eight thousand graduates of the twelve oldest colleges of this country (according to their catalogues) were then living. Of this number, 1,406 were clergymen. As some of the catalogues consulted were several years old, this number was of necessity greatly

within the truth. Between the years 1800 and 1810, it is found that of 2,792 graduates, four hundred and fifty-three became clergymen. Here is pretty good evidence that religion is not neglected in America, and that its ministers are not, as a matter of course, absolutely ignorant.

But the effects of the literary institutions of the United States are somewhat peculiar. Few men devote their lives to scholarship. The knowledge that is actually acquired, is perhaps quite sufficient for the more practical and useful pursuits. Thousands of young men, who have read the more familiar classics, who have gone through enough of mathematics to obtain a sense of their own tastes, and of the value of precision, who have cultivated *belles lettres* to a reasonable extent, and who have been moderately instructed in the arts of composition, and in the rules of taste, are given forth to the country to mingle in its active employments. I am inclined to believe that a class of American graduates carries away with it quite as much general and diversified knowledge, as a class from one of our own universities. The excellence in particular branches is commonly wanting; but the deficiency is more than supplied by variety of information. The youth who has passed four years within the walls of a college, goes into the office of a lawyer for a few more. The profession of the law is not subdivided in America. The same man is counsellor, attorney, and conveyancer. Here the student gets a general insight into the principles, and a familiarity with the practice of the law, rather than an acquaintance with the study as a science. With this instruction he enters the world as a practitioner. Instead of existing in a state of dreaming retrospection, lost in a maze of theories, he is at once turned loose into the jostlings of the world. If perchance he encounters an antagonist a little more erudite than himself, he seizes the natural truth for his sheet-an-

chor, and leaves precedent and quaint follies to him who has made them his study and delight. No doubt he often blunders, and is frequently, of necessity, defeated. But in the course of this irreverent treatment, usages and opinions, which are bottomed in no better foundation than antiquity, and which are as inapplicable to the present state of the world, as the present state of the world is, or ought to be, unfavourable to all feudal absurdities, come to receive their death-warrants. In the mean time, by dint of sheer experience, and by the collision of intellects, the practitioner gets a stock of learning, that is acquired in the best possible school; and, what is of far more importance, the laws themselves get a dress which brings them within the fashions of the day. This same man becomes a legislator perhaps, and, if particularly clever, he is made to take an active part in the framing of laws that are not to harmonize with the other parts of an elaborate theory, but which are intended to make men comfortable and happy. Now, taken with more or less qualification, this is the history of thousands in this country, and it is also an important part of the history of the country itself.

In considering the course of instruction in the United States, you are always to commence at the foundation. The common schools, which so generally exist, have certainly elevated the population above that of any other country, and are still elevating it higher, as they improve and increase in numbers. Law is getting every day to be more of a science, but it is a science that is forming rules better adapted to the spirit of the age. Medicine is improving, and in the cities it is, perhaps now, in point of practice, quite on a level with that of Europe. Indeed, the well-educated American physician very commonly enjoys an advantage that is little known in Europe. After obtaining a degree in his own country, he passes a few years in London, Edinburgh, Paris, and fre-

quently in Germany, and returns with his gleanings from their several schools. This is not the case with one individual, but with many, annually. Indeed, there is so much of a fashion in it, and the custom is attended by so many positive advantages, that its neglect would be a serious obstacle to any very eminent success. Good operators are by no means scarce, and as surgery and medicine are united in the same person, there is great judgment in their practice. Human life is something more valuable in America than in Europe, and I think a critical attention to patients more common here than with us, especially when the sufferer belongs to an inferior condition in life. The profession is highly respectable; and in all parts of the country the better sort of its practitioners mingle, on terms of perfect equality, with the highest classes of society. There are several physicians in Congress, and a great many in the different State legislatures.

Of the ministry it is unnecessary to speak. The clergy are of all denominations, and they are educated, or not, precisely as they belong to sects which consider the gift of human knowledge of any importance. You have already seen how large a proportion of the graduates of some of the colleges enter the desk.

As respects authorship, there is not much to be said. Compared to the books that are printed and read, those of native origin are few indeed. The principal reason of this poverty of original writers, is owing to the circumstance that men are not yet driven to their wits for bread. The United States are the first nation that possessed institutions, and, of course, distinctive opinions of its own, that was ever dependent on a foreign people for its literature. Speaking the same language as the English, and long in the habit of importing their books from the mother country, the revolution effected no immediate change

in the nature of their studies, or mental amusements. The works were re-printed, it is true, for the purposes of economy, but they stil. continued English. Had the latter nation used this powerful engine with tolerable address, I think they would have secured such an ally in this country as would have rendered their own decline not only more secure, but as illustrious as had been their rise. There are many theories entertained as to the effect produced in this country by the falsehoods and jealous calumnies which have been undeniably uttered in the mother country, by means of the press, concerning her republican descendant. It is my own opinion that, like all other ridiculous absurdities, they have defeated themselves, and that they are now more laughed at and derided, even here, than resented. By all that I can learn, twenty years ago, the Americans were, perhaps, far too much disposed to receive the opinions and to adopt the prejudices of their relatives; whereas, I think it is very apparent that they are now beginning to receive them with singular distrust. It is not worth our while to enter further into this subject, except as it has had, or is likely to have, an influence on the national literature.*

It is quite obvious, that, so far as taste and forms alone are concerned, the literature of England and that of America must be fashioned after the same models. The authors, previously to the revolution, are common property, and it is quite idle to say that the American has not just as good a right to claim Milton, and Shakspeare, and all the old masters of the language, for his countrymen, as an Englishman. The

* The writer might give, in proof of this opinion, one fact. He is led to believe that, so lately as within ten years, several English periodical works were re-printed, and much read in the United States, and that now they patronize their own, while the former are far less sought, though the demand, by means of the increased population, should have been nearly doubled. Some of the works are no longer even re-printed.

Americans having continued to cultivate, and to cultivate extensively, an acquaintance with the writers of the mother country, since the separation, it is evident they must have kept pace with the trifling changes of the day. The only peculiarity that can, or ought to be expected in their literature, is that which is connected with the promulgation of their distinctive political opinions. They have not been remiss in this duty, as any one may see, who chooses to examine their books. But we will devote a few minutes to a more minute account of the actual condition of American literature.

The first, and the most important, though certainly the most familiar branch of this subject, is connected with the public journals. It is not easy to say how many newspapers are printed in the United States. The estimated number varies from six hundred to a thousand. In the State of New-York there are more than fifty counties. Now, it is rare that a county, in a State as old as that of New-York, (especially in the more northern parts of the country), does not possess one paper at least. The cities have many. The smaller towns sometimes have three or four, and very many of the counties four or five. There cannot be many less than one hundred and fifty journals in the State of New-York alone. Pennsylvania is said to possess eighty. But we will suppose that these two States publish two hundred journals. They contain about 3,000,000 of inhabitants. As the former is an enlightened State, and the latter rather below the scale of the general intelligence of the nation, it may not be a very bad average of the whole population. This rate would give eight hundred journals for the United States, which is probably something within the truth. I confess, however, this manner of equalizing estimates in America, is very uncertain in general, since a great deal, in such a

question, must depend on the progress of society in each particular section of the country.

As might be expected, there is nearly every degree of merit to be found in these journals. No one of them has the benefit of that collected talent which is so often enlisted in the support of the more important journals of Europe. There is not often more than one editor to the best; but he is usually some man who has seen, in his own person, enough of men and things to enable him to speak with tolerable discretion on passing events. The usefulness of the American journals, however, does not consist in their giving the tone to the public mind, in politics and morals, but in imparting facts. It is certain that, could the journals agree, they might, by their united efforts, give a powerful inclination to the common will. But, in point of fact, they do not agree on any one subject, or set of subjects, except, perhaps, on those which directly affect their own interests. They, consequently, counteract, instead of aiding each other, on all points of disputed policy; and it is in the bold and sturdy discussions that follow, that men arrive at the truth. The occasional union in their own favour, is a thing too easily seen through to do either good or harm. So far, then, from the journals succeeding in leading the public opinion astray, they are invariably obliged to submit to it. They serve to keep it alive, by furnishing the means for its expression, but they rarely do more. Of course, the influence of each particular press is in proportion to the constancy and the ability with which it is found to support what is thought to be sound principles; but those principles must be in accordance with the private opinions of men, or most of their labour is lost.

The public press in America is rather more decent than that of England, and less decorous than that of France. The tone of the nation, and the respect

for private feelings, which are, perhaps, in some measure, the consequence of a less artificial state of society, produce the former; and the liberty, which is a necessary attendant of fearless discussion, is, I think, the cause of the latter. The affairs of an individual are rarely touched upon in the journals of this country; never, unless it is thought they have a direct connexion with the public interests, or from a wish to do him good. Still there is a habit, getting into use in America, no less than in France, that is borrowed from the English, which proves that the more unworthy feelings of our nature are common to men under all systems, and only need opportunity to find encouragement. I allude to the practice of repeating the proceedings of the courts of justice, in order to cater to a vicious appetite for amusement in the public.

It is pretended that, as a court of justice is open to the world, there can be no harm in giving the utmost publicity to its proceedings. It is strange the courts should act so rigidly on the principle, that it is better a dozen guilty men should go free, than that one innocent man should suffer, and yet permit the gross injustice that is daily done by means of this practice. One would think, that if a court of justice is so open to the world, that it should be the business of the people of the world to enter it, in order that they might be certain that the information they crave should be without colouring or exaggeration. It is idle to say that the reports are accurate, and that he who reads is enabled to do justice to the accused, by comparing the facts that are laid before him. A reporter may give the expression of the tongue; but can he convey that of the eye, of the countenance, or of the form?—without regarding all of which, no man is perfectly master of the degree of credibility that is due to any witness of whose character he is necessarily ignorant. But every man has an infallible

means of assuring himself of the value of these reports. Who has ever read a dozen of them without meeting with one (or perhaps more,) in which the decision of the court and jury is to him a matter of surprise? It is true he assumes, that those who were present knew best, and as he has no great interest in the matter, he is commonly satisfied. But how is it with the unfortunate man who is wrongfully brought out of his retirement to repel an unjust attack against his person, his property, or his character? If he be a man of virtue, he is a man of sensibility; and not only he, but, what is far worse, those tender beings, whose existence is wrapped up in his own, are to be wounded daily and hourly, for weeks at a time, in order that a depraved appetite should be glutted. It is enough for justice that her proceedings should be so public as to prevent the danger of corruption; but we pervert a blessing to a curse, in making that which was intended for our protection, the means of so much individual misery. It is an unavoidable evil of the law that it necessarily works some wrong, in order to do much good; but it is cruel that even the acquittal of a man should be unnecessarily circulated, in a manner to make all men remember that he had been accused. We have proof of the consequences of this practice in England. Men daily shrink from resistance to base frauds, rather than expose themselves to the observations and comments of those who enliven their breakfasts by sporting with these exhibitions of their fellow-creatures. There are, undoubtedly, cases of that magnitude which require some sacrifice of private feelings, in order that the community should reap the advantage; but the regular books are sufficient for authorities—the decisions of the courts are sufficient for justice—and the utmost possible oblivion should prove as nearly sufficient as may be to serve the ends of a prudent and a righteous humanity.

Nothing can be more free than the press of this country, on all subjects connected with politics. Treason cannot be written, unless by communicating with an open enemy. There is no other protection to a public man than that which is given by an independent jury, which punishes, of course, in proportion to the dignity and importance of the injured party. But the utmost lenity is always used in construing the right of the press to canvass the public acts of public men. Mere commonplace charges defeat themselves, and get into discredit so soon as to be lost, while graver accusations are met by grave replies. There is no doubt that the complacency of individuals is sometimes disturbed by these liberties; but they serve to keep the officers of the government to their work, while they rarely do any lasting, or even temporary injury. Serious and criminal accusations against a public man, if groundless, are, by the law of reason, a crime against the community, and, as such, they are punished. The general principle observed in these matters is very simple. If A. accuse B. of an act that is an offence against law, he may be called on for his proof, and if he fail he must take the consequences. But an editor of a paper, or any one else, who should bring a criminal charge, no matter how grave, against the President, and who could prove it, is just as certain of doing it with impunity, as if he held the whole power in his own hands. He would be protected by the invincible shield of public opinion, which is not only in consonance with the law, but which, in this country, makes law.

Actions for injuries done by the press, considering the number of journals, are astonishingly rare in America. When one remembers the usual difficulty of obtaining legal proof, which is a constant temptation, even to the guilty, to appeal to the courts; and, on the other hand, the great freedom of the press, which

is a constant temptation to abuse the trust, this fact, in itself, furnishes irresistible evidence of the general tone of decency which predominates in this nation. The truth is, that public opinion, among its other laws, has imperiously prescribed that, amidst the utmost latitude of discussion, certain limits shall not be passed; and public opinion, which is so completely the offspring of a free press, must be obeyed in this, as well as in other matters.

Leaving the journals, we come to those publications which make their appearance periodically. Of these there are a good many, some few of which are well supported. There are several scientific works, that are printed monthly, or quarterly, of respectable merit, and four or five reviews. Magazines of a more general character are not much encouraged. England, which is teeming with educated men, who are glad to make their bread by writing for these works, still affords too strong a competition for the success of any American attempts, in this species of literature. Though few, perhaps no English magazine is actually republished in America, a vast number are imported and read in the towns, where the support for any similar original production must first be found.

The literature of the United States has, indeed, too powerful obstacles to conquer before (to use a mercantile expression) it can ever enter the markets of its own country on terms of perfect equality with that of England. Solitary and individual works of genius may, indeed, be occasionally brought to light, under the impulses of the high feeling which has conceived them; but, I fear, a good, wholesome, profitable and continued pecuniary support, is the applause that talent most craves. The fact, that an American publisher can get an English work without money, must, for a few years longer, (unless legislative protection shall be extended to their own authors,) have a tendency to repress a national literature. No man

will pay a writer for an epic, a tragedy, a sonnet, a history, or a romance, when he can get a work of equal merit for nothing. I have conversed with those who are conversant on the subject, and, I confess, I have been astonished at the information they imparted.

A capital American publisher has assured me that there are not a dozen writers in this country, whose works he should feel confidence in publishing at all, while he reprints hundreds of English books without the least hesitation. This preference is by no means so much owing to any difference in merit, as to the fact that, when the price of the original author is to be added to the uniform hazard which accompanies all literary speculations, the risk becomes too great. The general taste of the reading world in this country is better than that of England.* The fact is both proved and explained by the circumstance that thousands of works that are printed and read in the mother country, are not printed and read here. The publisher on this side of the Atlantic has the advantage of seeing the reviews of every book he wishes to print, and, what is of far more importance, he knows, with the exception of books that he is sure of selling, by means of a name, the decision of the English critics before he makes his choice. Nine times in ten, popularity, which is all he looks for, is a sufficient test of general merit. Thus, while you find every English work of character, or notoriety, on the shelves of an American book-store, you may ask in vain for most of the trash that is so greedily devoured in the circulating libraries of the mother country, and which would be just as eagerly devoured here, had not a better taste been created by a

* The writer does not mean that the best taste of America is better than that of England; perhaps it is not quite so good; but, as a whole, the American reading world requires better books than the whole of the English reading world.

compelled abstinence. That taste must now be overcome before such works could be sold at all.

When I say that books are not rejected here, from any want of talent in the writers, perhaps I ought to explain. I wish to express something a little different. Talent is sure of too many avenues to wealth and honours, in America, to seek, unnecessarily, an unknown and hazardous path. It is better paid in the ordinary pursuits of life, than it would be likely to be paid by an adventure in which an extraordinary and skilful, because practised, foreign competition is certain. Perhaps high talent does not often make the trial with the American bookseller; but it is precisely for the reason I have named.

The second obstacle against which American literature has to contend, is in the poverty of materials. There is scarcely an ore which contributes to the wealth of the author, that is found, here, in veins as rich as in Europe. There are no annals for the historian; no follies (beyond the most vulgar and commonplace) for the satirist; no manners for the dramatist; no obscure fictions for the writer of romance; no gross and hardy offences against decorum for the moralist; nor any of the rich artificial auxiliaries of poetry. The weakest hand can extract a spark from the flint, but it would baffle the strength of a giant to attempt kindling a flame with a pudding-stone. I very well know there are theorists who assume that the society and institutions of this country are, or ought to be, particularly favourable to novelties and variety. But the experience of one month, in these States, is sufficient to show any observant man the falsity of their position. The effect of a promiscuous assemblage any where, is to create a standard of deportment; and great liberty permits every one to aim at its attainment. I have never seen a nation so much alike in my life, as the people of the United States, and what is more, they are not

only like each other, but they are remarkably like that which common sense tells them they ought to resemble. No doubt, traits of character that are a little peculiar, without, however, being either very poetical, or very rich, are to be found in remote districts; but they are rare, and not always happy exceptions. In short, it is not possible to conceive a state of society in which more of the attributes of plain good sense, or fewer of the artificial absurdities of life, are to be found, than here. There is no costume for the peasant, (there is scarcely a peasant at all,) no wig for the judge, no baton for the general, no diadem for the chief magistrate. The darkest ages of their history are illuminated by the light of truth; the utmost efforts of their chivalry are limited by the laws of God; and even the deeds of their sages and heroes are to be sung in a language that would differ but little from a version of the ten commandments. However useful and respectable all this may be in actual life, it indicates but one direction to the man of genius.

It is very true there are a few young poets now living in this country, who have known how to extract sweets from even these wholesome, but scentless native plants. They have, however, been compelled to seek their inspiration in the universal laws of nature, and they have succeeded, precisely in proportion as they have been most general in their application. Among these gifted young men, there is one (Halleck) who is remarkable for an exquisite vein of ironical wit, mingled with a fine, poetical, and, frequently, a lofty expression. This gentleman commenced his career as a satirist in one of the journals of New-York. Heaven knows, his materials were none of the richest; and yet the melody of his verse, the quaintness and force of his comparisons, and the exceeding humour of his strong points, brought him instantly into notice. He then attempt-

ed a general satire, by giving the history of the early days of a *belle*. He was again successful, though every body, at least every body of any talent, felt that he wrote in leading-strings. But he happened, shortly after the appearance of the little volume just named, (Fanny,) to visit England. Here his spirit was properly excited, and, probably on a rainy day, he was induced to try his hand at a *jeu d'esprit*, in the mother country. The result was one of the finest semi-heroic ironical descriptions to be found in the English language.* This simple fact, in itself, proves the truth of a great deal of what I have just been writing, since it shows the effect a superiority of material can produce on the efforts of a man of true genius.

Notwithstanding the difficulties of the subject, talent has even done more than in the instance of Mr. Halleck. I could mention several other young poets of this country of rare merit. By mentioning Bryant, Percival, and Sprague, I shall direct your attention to the names of those whose works would be most likely to give you pleasure. Unfortunately they are not yet known in Italian, but I think even you would not turn in distaste from the task of translation which the best of their effusions will invite.

The next, though certainly an inferior branch of imaginative writing, is fictitious composition. From the facts just named, you cannot expect that the novelists, or romance writers of the United States, should be very successful. The same reason will be likely, for a long time to come, to repress the ardour of dramatic genius. Still, tales and plays are no novelties in the literature of this country. Of the former, there are many as old as soon after the revolution, and a vast number have been published within the last five years. One of their authors of romance,

* This little *morceau* of pleasant irony is called Alnwick Castle.

who curbed his talents by as few allusions as possible to actual society, is distinguished for power and comprehensiveness of thought. I remember to have read one of his books (Wieland) when a boy, and I take it to be a never-failing evidence of genius, that, amid a thousand similar pictures which have succeeded, the images it has left, still stand distinct and prominent in my recollection. This author (Mr. Brockden Brown) enjoys a high reputation among his countrymen, whose opinions are sufficiently impartial, since he flattered no particular prejudice of the nation in any of his works.

The reputation of Irving is well known to you. He is an author distinguished for a quality (humour) that has been denied his countrymen; and his merit is the more rare, that it has been shown in a state of society so cold and so restrained. Besides these writers, there are many others of a similar character, who enjoy a greater or less degree of favour in their own country. The works of two or three have even been translated (into French) in Europe, and a great many are reprinted in England. Though every writer of fiction in America has to contend against the difficulties I have named, there is a certain interest in the novelty of the subject, which is not without its charm. I think, however, it will be found that they have all been successful, or the reverse, just as they have drawn warily, or freely, on the distinctive habits of their own country. I now speak of their success purely as writers of romance. It certainly would be possible for an American to give a description of the manners of his own country, in a book that he might choose to call a romance, which should be read, because the world is curious on the subject, but which would certainly never be read for that nearly indefinable poetical interest which attaches itself to a description of manners less bald and uniform. All the attempts to blend history with romance in America,

have been comparatively failures, (and perhaps fortunately,) since the subjects are too familiar to be treated with the freedom that the imagination absolutely requires. Some of the descriptions of the progress of society on the borders, have had a rather better success, since there is a positive, though no very poetical, novelty in the subject; but, on the whole, the books which have been best received, are those in which the authors have trusted most to their own conceptions of character, and to qualities that are common to the rest of the world and to human nature. This fact, if its truth be admitted, will serve to prove that the American writer must seek his renown in the exhibition of qualities that are general, while he is confessedly compelled to limit his observations to a state of society that has a wonderful tendency not only to repress passion, but to equalize humours.

The Americans have always been prolific writers on polemics and politics. Their sermons and fourth of July orations are numberless. Their historians, without being very classical or very profound, are remarkable for truth and good sense. There is not, perhaps, in the language a closer reasoner in metaphysics than Edwards; and their theological writers find great favour among the sectarians of their respective schools.

The stage of the United States is decidedly English. Both plays and players, with few exceptions, are imported. Theatres are numerous, and they are to be found in places where a traveller would little expect to meet them. Of course they are of all sizes, and of every degree of decoration and architectural beauty known in Europe, below the very highest. The façade of the principal theatre in Philadelphia, is a chaste specimen in marble, of the Ionic, if my memory is correct. In New-York, there are two theatres about as large as the Théatre Français

(in the interior), and not much inferior in embellishments. Besides these, there is a very pretty little theatre, where lighter pieces are performed, and another with a vast stage for melo-dramas. There are also one or two other places of dramatic representation in this city, in which horses and men contend for the bays.

The Americans pay well for dramatic talent. Cooke, the greatest English tragedian of our age, died on this side of the Atlantic; and there are few players of eminence in the mother country who are not tempted, at some time or other, to cross the ocean. Shakspeare is, of course, the great author of America, as he is of England, and I think he is quite as well relished here as there. In point of taste, if all the rest of the world be any thing against England, that of America is the best, since it unquestionably approaches nearest to that of the continent of Europe. Nearly one-half of the theatrical taste of the English is condemned by their own judgments, since the stage is not much supported by those who have had an opportunity of seeing any other. You will be apt to ask me how it happens, then, that the American taste is better? Because the people, being less exaggerated in their habits, are less disposed to tolerate caricatures, and because the theatres are not yet sufficiently numerous (though that hour is near) to admit of a representation that shall not be subject to the control of a certain degree of intelligence. I have heard an English player complain that he never saw such a dull audience as the one before which he had just been exhibiting; and I heard the same audience complain that they never listened to such dull jokes. Now, there was talent enough in both parties; but the one had formed his taste in a coarse school, and the others had formed theirs under the dominion of common sense. Independently of this peculiarity, there is a vast deal of acquired, travelled taste in

this country. English tragedy, and high English comedy, both of which, you know, are excellent, never fail here, if well played; that is, they never fail under the usual limits of all amusement. One will cloy of sweets. But the fact of the taste and judgment of these people, in theatrical exhibitions, is proved by the number of their good theatres, compared to their population.

Of dramatic writers there are none, or next to none. The remarks I have made in respect to novels apply with double force to this species of composition. A witty and successful American comedy could only proceed from extraordinary talent. There would be less difficulty, certainly, with a tragedy; but still, there is rather too much foreign competition, and too much domestic employment in other pursuits, to invite genius to so doubtful an enterprise. The very baldness of ordinary American life is in deadly hostility to scenic representation. The character must be supported solely by its intrinsic power. The judge, the footman, the clown, the lawyer, the belle, or the beau, can receive no great assistance from dress. Melo-dramas, except the scene should be laid in the woods, are out of the question. It would be necessary to seek the great clock, which is to strike the portentous twelve blows, in the nearest church; a vaulted passage would degenerate into a cellar; and, as for ghosts, the country was discovered, since their visitations have ceased. The smallest departure from the incidents of ordinary life would do violence to every man's experience; and, as already mentioned, the passions which belong to human nature must be delineated, in America, subject to the influence of that despot—common sense.

Notwithstanding the overwhelming influence of British publications, and all the difficulties I have named, original books are getting to be numerous in the United States. The impulses of talent and intel-

ligence are bearing down a thousand obstacles. I think the new works will increase rapidly, and that they are destined to produce a powerful influence on the world. We will pursue this subject another time.—Adieu.

TO THE ABBATE GIROMACHI,

&c. &c.

FLORENCE.

Washington, ——

—You will be satisfied with these reasons for the abrupt conclusion of my last. I shall now tax your patience for a short continuation of the subject.

Although there are so many reasons why an imaginative literature should not be speedily created in this country, there is none, but that general activity of employment which is not favourable to study, why science and all the useful arts should not be cultivated here, perhaps, more than any where else. Great attention is already paid to the latter. Though there is scarce such a thing as a capital picture in this whole country, I have seen more beautiful, graceful, and convenient ploughs in positive use here, than are probably to be found in the whole of Europe united. In this single fact may be traced the history of the character of the people, and the germ of their future greatness. Their axe is admirable for form, for neatness, and precision of weight, and it is wielded with a skill that is next to incredible. Reapers are nearly unknown; but I have seen single individuals enter a field of grain in the morning, and

clear acres of its golden burthen, by means of the *cradle*,* with a rapidity that has amazed me. The vast multitude of their inventions, as they are exhibited in the Patent Office in this city, ought to furnish food for grave reflection to every stranger. Several large rooms are filled with the models, many of which give evidence of the most acute ingenuity. When one recollects the average proportion of adults to which the population must have been confined during the last thirty-five years,† the number of their inventions is marvellous. A great many of these models contain no new principle, nor any new application of an old principle; but, as in such cases money has been paid by those who deposit them there without an object, it is fair to presume that they were inventions so far as the claimants were concerned. There are so few means by which men, in remote districts of this country, can profit by the ideas of other people in these matters, that it is probable there are not a dozen machines lodged in the office, of which the parties concerned did not honestly believe themselves the inventors. You may estimate the activity of thought, which distinguishes the mass of this nation from all other people, by this fact. It is in itself a prodigious triumph to a young people to have given form and useful existence to the greatest improvement of our age; but the steam-boats are not the only gift of this nature, by many, that Europe has already received from the western hemisphere.

The general accumulation of science in this country is exceedingly great, though it is quite likely that few men have yet attained to a very eminent degree of knowledge in any one particular branch. Still it is probable, that the amount of science in the United

* The writer does not know whether this implement is an American invention or not.

† The whole period that the Patent Office has been in existence.

States, at this day, compared to what it was even fifteen years ago, and without reference to the increase of the population, is as five to one, or even in a still much greater proportion. Like all other learning, it is greatly on the advance.

In architecture the Americans have certainly no great reason to exult. They appear to have inherited the peculiarity of their ancestors, in all matters of mere taste. Their houses are mostly built of wood in the country and in the villages, and of bricks in the towns. There are, however, exceptions, in all cases, which reverse the rule. There are many farm-houses, seats, churches, court-houses, &c. in the country and smaller towns, which are of stone. Marble and granite are getting a good deal into use, too, in the more northern cities. The principal motive which controls their taste is economy. It is commonly cheapest to build of wood in the country, but where stone is at hand, and of a good quality, it begins to be preferred, in what may be called the second and third stages of the settlements. As the materials are cheap, the buildings are in common much larger than would be occupied by men of the same wealth in Europe. A house of forty or of forty-five feet front, and of thirty or thirty-five feet in depth, of two stories, with cellars, and garret, and with offices attached, is a usual dwelling for the owner of one or of two hundred acres of land, in a part of the country that has been under cultivation thirty or forty years. Such a man may be worth from five to ten thousand dollars. He has his growing orchard; fifty sheep; some eight or ten cows; a stock of young cattle; three or four horses; one or two yoke of oxen; hogs, poultry, and all the other provisions of a small farm. He grows his own maize; fattens his own pork; makes his own cider; kills his own beef; raises his own wheat, rye, and flax; and, in short, lives as much as possible on the articles of his

own production. There are thousands and tens of thousands of these sturdy, independent yeomen in the eastern, middle and north-western States.

The villas and country-seats are commonly pretty, without ever attaining much elegance of size. A better sort of American country-house will cover perhaps sixty or seventy feet of ground in length, and from fifty to sixty in depth. There are some of twice this size; but I should say the first was a fair average. There are a great many a size smaller. The expense of building is, of course, in proportion to the general cost of every article in the particular place where the house is erected. I am told the best buildings in New-York cost from thirty to forty thousand dollars. A few are even much more expensive. But the town-houses, occupied by a majority of their gentlemen (those who own their own dwellings), cost probably something under twenty thousand.* These are the habitations of the rich, exclusively. They are every where exceedingly neat, prettily furnished, frequently with great elegance, and are always comfortable.

As some general idea of the state of the useful arts must have been obtained, in the course of my previous letters to the fraternity, I shall now pass to those which are intended exclusively to embellish life.

The United States, considered with reference to their means and opportunities, have been exceedingly prolific in painters. It is rather remarkable, that, in a country where active and less hazardous employ-

* The writer afterwards saw a row of buildings in New-York of the following cost and dimensions; twenty-five feet front, (in marble) fifty-five feet deep, and of three stories, besides the basement. The lots were two hundred feet in depth The buildings were about as well finished as a third-rate London town-house. The cost of the whole was ten thousand dollars, and the rent six hundred dollars a-year. These houses were in the dearest city of America, but not in the dearest part of the town.

ments are so open to talent, men should take an inclination to a pursuit that is rarely profitable, and in which mediocrity is as annoying as success is triumphant. I cannot say that the majority of these gentlemen acknowledge that the fine arts are greatly encouraged in America, nor has it yet been my happy lot to enter a country in which artists and authors were very generally of opinion that the pen and the pencil received the rewards and honours which no one will deny they merit. A very great majority of the American artists are portrait painters. Some of them are highly esteemed by their own countrymen, and certainly there are a few of a good deal of merit. They are generally more distinguished for spirit and character, than for finish or grace; but it is quite evident that, as a class, they are rapidly improving. Drawing is the point in which they chiefly fail; and this, too, is probably an inherited defect, since most of them are disciples of the English school.

There are some highly respectable professional landscape painters. One of them (a Mr. Cole) possesses the rare faculty of giving to his pictures the impression of nature, to a degree so extraordinary, that he promises to become eminent. You know my eye is only for nature. I have heard both high eulogiums and sneering critiques on the powers of this young man, as an artist; some declaring that he has reached a point far beyond that attained by any of his competitors, and others denying that he knows how to make a sky look blue, *secundum artem*. To me his scenery is like the scenery from which he drew; and as he has taste and skill enough to reject what is disagreeable, and to arrange the attractive parts of his pictures, I only hope he will continue to study the great master from whom he has drawn his first inspirations. America has produced several historical painters. West, though a native of this country, and, perhaps with a pardonable vanity, claimed

as such by these people, was, to all intents and purposes an English artist. There are one or two of his pupils who practise their skill here, and a few others have aspired to the highest branch of their art. One of them (Mr. Alston) is said to be employed on a great and elaborate picture (the handwriting on the wall;) and as his taste and merit are universally admitted, a good deal is expected from his pencil. It may serve to give you a better idea of the taste for pictures in this country, or rather of the desire which exists to encourage talent, if I mention the price he is to receive for this work. A company of gentlemen are said to have bought the picture, in advance, by agreeing to pay ten thousand dollars. I believe it is their intention to remunerate themselves by exhibiting it, and then to deposit the work in some public place. Cabinet pieces, by this artist, are readily sold for prices of between three hundred and a thousand dollars, and the pencil of Cole is employed as much as he pleases. There are many other artists that paint portraits and landscapes, who seldom want orders. The government of the United States has paid Trumbull thirty-two thousand dollars for the four historical paintings that are destined to fill as many compartments in the rotunda, or the great hall of the Capitol.

It is plain that the system of elementary education pursued by this country, must bring an extraordinary quantity of talent, within the influence of those causes which lead to renown. If we suppose one hundred men in America to possess the same amount of native talent as one hundred men in any other part of the world, more of it will, of necessity, be excited to action, since more individuals are placed in situations to feel and to improve their infant powers. Although a certain degree of excellence in the higher branches of learning and of art, may yet be necessary to create

a standard, and even for the establishments of higher schools or real universities, still the truth of this position is proved by the fact, that there already exists, among this people, a far more advanced state of improvement in all that relates to the familiar interests of life than among any other. It is true that a division of labour, and vast competition, may create a degree of minute perfection in many articles of European manufacture, that is not known in the same articles manufactured here; but I think it will be commonly found, in all such cases, that these wary people have counted the profit and the cost with sufficient accuracy. As circumstances vary, they instantly improve; and, once induced to persevere, they soon fearlessly challenge competition.

The purely intellectual day of America is yet in its dawn. But its sun will not arise from darkness, like those of nations with whose experience we are familiar; nor is the approach of its meridian to be calculated by the known progress of any other people. The learned professions are now full to overflowing, not so much with learning as with incumbents, certainly, but so much so, as to begin to give a new direction to education and talents. Writers are already getting to be numerous, for literature is beginning to be profitable. Those authors who are successful, receive prices for their labours, which exceed those paid to the authors of any country, England alone excepted; and which exceed even the prices paid to the most distinguished authors of the mother country, if the difference in the relative value of money in the two countries, and in the luxury of the press, be computed. The same work which is sold in England for six dollars, is sold in the United States for two. The profit to the publisher is obtained out of a common rate of per centage. Now, as thirty-three and a third per cent. on six thousand

dollars, is two thousand,* and on two thousand dollars, only six hundred and sixty-six, it is quite evident, that if both parties sell one thousand copies of a work, the English publisher pockets three times the most profit. And yet, with one or two exceptions, and notwithstanding the great difference in the population of the two countries, the English bookseller rarely sells more, if he does as many, copies of a book, than the American. It is the extraordinary demand which enables the American publisher to pay so well, and which, provided there was no English competition, would enable him to pay still better, or rather still more generally, than he does at present.

The literature of the United States is a subject of the highest interest to the civilized world; for when it does begin to be felt, it will be felt with a force, a directness, and a common sense in its application, that has never yet been known. If there were no other points of difference between this country and other nations, those of its political and religious freedom, alone, would give a colour of the highest importance to the writings of a people so thoroughly imbued with their distinctive principles, and so keenly alive to their advantages. The example of America has been silently operating on Europe for half a century; but its doctrines and its experience, exhibited with the understanding of those familiar with both, have never yet been pressed on our attention. I think the time for the experiment is getting near.

A curious inquiry might be raised as to the probable fate of the English language, among so many people having equal claims to its possession. I put this question to my friend, who has kindly permitted me to give you the substance of his reply. You will

* This calculation supposes one-third of the price to go to the trade in discount, one-third to the expenses, and the other third to constitute the joint profit of the author and publisher.

at once understand that this is a subject which requires a greater knowledge of the matter in dispute, than what I, as a foreigner, can claim :—

"In order to decide which nation speaks the English language best, it becomes necessary to refer to some standard. If it be assumed that the higher classes in London are always to set the fashion in pronunciation, and the best living writers in England are to fix the meaning of words, the point is clearly decided in their favour, since one cannot see on what principle they are to be put in the wrong. That the better company of London must set the fashion for the pronunciation of words in England, and indeed for the whole English empire, is quite plain ; for, as this very company comprises all those whose manners, birth, fortune, and political distinction, make them the objects of admiration, it becomes necessary to imitate their affectations, whether of speech or air, in order to create the impression that one belongs to their society. It is absurd to think that either parliament, or the stage, or the universities, or the church, can produce any very serious effect on the slighter forms of utterance adopted by this powerful caste. The player may hint at the laws of prosody for ever, unless his rule happens to suit the public ear, it becomes no more than the pronunciation of the stage. The fellow, when he gets beyond his cloisters, is glad to conceal the habits of retirement in the language of the world; and as for the member of Parliament, if he happen to be of the caste, he speaks like the rest of them ; and if not, he is no better than a vulgar fellow, who is very glad to conceal his provincialisms by having as little said about them as possible. In short, the bishop might just as well expect to induce the exquisite to wear a copy of his wig, or the representative of Othello, to set the fashion of smooty faces, as either of them to think of giving the tone to pronunciation, or even to

the meaning of words. A secret and lasting influence is no doubt produced by education; but fashion is far more imperious than even the laws of the schools. It is, I think, a capital mistake, to believe that either of the professions named, produce any great impression on the spoken language of England. They receive more from fashion than they give to it and they each have their particular phrases, but they rarely go any farther than their own limits. This is more or less the case in all other European nations. The rule is more absolute, however, in England than in France, for instance, because the former has no academy, and because men of letters have far less circulation, and, of course, far less influence in society there, than in the neighbouring kingdom. The tendency of every thing in England is to aristocracy. I can conceive that the King of England might very well set a fashion in the pronunciation of a word, because, being the greatest aristocrat of the nation, the smaller ones might be ambitious of showing that they kept enough of his company to catch his imperfections of speech; but, as for the King of France, he sits too much on a pinnacle for men to presume to imitate his blunders. A powerful, wealthy, hereditary, but subsidizing aristocracy, rules all things in England; but, while wit gives up to the King and *la charte*, the control of politics in France, it asserts its own prerogative over every other interest of the empire, religion, perhaps, a little excepted.

"There exists a very different state of things in America. If we had a great capital, like London, where men of leisure, and fortune, and education, periodically assembled to amuse themselves, I think we should establish a fashionable aristocracy, too, which should give the mode to the forms of speech, as well as to that of dress and deportment. Perhaps the influence of talent and wit would be as much

felt in such a town as in Paris; for it is the great peculiarity of our institutions to give more influence to talents than to any one other thing. But we have no such capital, nor are we likely, for a long time to come, to have one of sufficient magnitude to produce any great effect on the language. In those States where many men of leisure and education are to be found, there are large towns, in which they pass their winters, and where, of course, they observe all those forms which are more or less peculiar to themselves. The habits of polite life, and even the pronunciation of Boston, of New-York, of Baltimore, and of Philadelphia, vary in many things, and a practised ear may tell a native of either of these places, from a native of any one of the others, by some little peculiarity of speech. There is yet no predominating influence to induce the fashionables of these towns to wish to imitate the fashionables of any other. If any place is to possess this influence, it will certainly be New-York; but I think, on an examination of the subject, that it can be made to appear that an entirely different standard for the language must be established in the United States, from that which governs so absolutely in England.

"If the people of this country were like the people of any other country on earth, we should be speaking at this moment a great variety of nearly unintelligible patois; but, in point of fact, the people of the United States, with the exception of a few of German and French descent, speak, as a body, an incomparably better English than the people of the mother country. There is not, probably, a man (of English descent) born in this country, who would not be perfectly intelligible to all whom he should meet in the streets of London, though a vast number of those he met in the streets of London would be nearly unintelligible to him. In fine, we speak our language, as a nation,

better than any other people speak their language.* When one reflects on the immense surface of country that we occupy, the general accuracy, in pronunciation and in the use of words, is quite astonishing. This resemblance in speech can only be ascribed to the great diffusion of intelligence, and to the inexhaustible activity of the population, which, in a manner, destroys space.

"It is another peculiarity of our institutions, that the language of the country, instead of becoming more divided into provincial dialects, is becoming, not only more assimilated to itself as a whole, but more assimilated to a standard which sound general principles, and the best authorities among our old writers, would justify. The distinctions in speech between New-England and New-York, or Pennsylvania, or any other State, were far greater twenty years ago than they are now. Emigration alone would produce a large portion of this change; but emigration would often introduce provincialisms without correcting them, did it not also, by bringing acute men together, sharpen wits, provoke comparisons, challenge investigations, and, finally, fix a standard.

"It has been a matter of hot dispute, for the last twenty years, in which of our large towns the best English is spoken. The result of this discussion has been to convince most people who know any thing of the matter, that a perfectly pure English is spoken nowhere, and to establish the superiority, on one point in favour of Boston, on another in favour of New-York, and so on to the end of the chapter. The effect of all this controversy is, to make men think seriously on the subject, and thinking seriously is the first step in amendment. We do amend, and

* Of course the writer calls Italy one nation, and all Germany one nation, so far as language is concerned.

each year introduces a better and purer English into our country. We are obliged, as you may suppose, to have recourse to some standard to settle these contentions. What shall this standard be? It is not society, for that itself is divided on the disputed points; it cannot be the church, for there is none that will be acknowledged by all parties; it cannot be the stage, for that is composed of foreigners, and possesses little influence on morals, politics, or any thing else; nor the universities, for they are provincial, and parties to the dispute; nor Congress, for that does not represent the fashion and education of the nation; nor the court, for there is none but the President, and he is often a hot partisan; nor the fashions of speech in England, for we often find as much fault with them as we do with our own. Thus, you see, we are reduced to the necessity of consulting reason, and authority, and analogy, and all the known laws of language, in order to arrive at our object. This we are daily doing, and I think the consequence will be, that, in another generation or two, far more *reasonable* English will be used in this country than exists here now. How far this melioration or purification of our language will affect the mother country, is another question.

"It is, perhaps, twenty years too soon to expect that England will very complacently submit to receive opinions or fashions very directly from America." [What she will do twenty years later, is a question that little concerns us, dear Abbate, since I have not, and you ought not to have, any very direct interests in the fortunes of posterity.] "But the time has already arrived, when America is beginning to receive with great distrust fashions and opinions from England. Until within the last fifteen years, the influence of the mother country, in all things connected with mere usages, was predominant to an in-

credible extent; but every day is making a greater change.

"On a thousand subjects we have been rudely provoked into comparisons,—an experiment that the most faultless generally find to be attended with hazard. We are a bold though a quiet people, and names and fashions go for but little when set in opposition to the unaccommodating and downright good sense of this nation. It may be enough for an Englishman that an innovation on language is supported by the pretty lips of such or such a belle of quality and high degree; but the American sees too many pretty lips at home, to be very submissive to any foreign dictation of this sort. I think it plain, therefore, that the language must be reduced to known general rules, and rules, too, that shall be respected as such rules should be, or else we shall have a dialect distinct from that of the mother country. I have not, however, the slightest apprehensions of any thing of the kind arriving, since any one who understands the use of figures can estimate the probable influence of the two nations half a century hence. I think it will be just as much the desire of England then to be in our fashion, as it was our desire twenty years ago to be in hers, and for precisely the same reason. The influence of fifty millions of people, living under one government, backed by enormous wealth, extended intelligence, a powerful literature, and unrivalled freedom, cannot be very problematical, in the eyes of any man who is capable of regarding the subject free from prejudice or passion. I very well know there is a fashion of predicting the separation of our States, and a consequent disorganization of society, which would certainly weaken that influence. These predictions were made fifty years ago with rather more confidence than they are made now, and those who know most in the matter, treat them with very little deference. But, admitting that they should be

realized, in what particular will the result materially affect the question before us? A division of this republic into two or three republics, is the utmost that can be expected. There would still exist those intimate relations between the parts of our present empire which find their support in a conformity of principles, and our intercourse and literature would necessarily be essentially the same. I cannot see that the impression on the language would in any degree be weakened, except that, by dividing our power, we might retard a little the period when the weight of that power should obtain its natural and necessary preponderance. You may be assured, that, in thinking on this subject, I have not forgotten that history supplies sufficient evidence that small communities may exercise a vast influence over larger; but I do not know where to find a precedent for a large community, possessing equal activity and intelligence, submitting to be controlled, either morally or politically, by one physically much weaker. Our own history already furnishes a striking example of the very reverse; and as we are bent on perpetuating all the means of our present independence, it is fair to presume that we shall gain a moral ascendancy in the world, in proportion as we gain physical force. If a pretty duchess can now set a fashion in speech, what will not a combination of two hundred millions of persons do, (the number is not at all exaggerated if we carry the time forward a century and a half,) more especially if all of them shall happen to possess a reasonable knowledge of the use of letters.

"You may have a curiosity to know something of the present state of the language in America. I have already said that there is no patois throughout the whole of this country. There is broken English among the Germans, French, and other foreigners, but nothing that is very widely distinct from the language of London. Still there are words of perfectly

provincial use, most of which were brought from certain parts of the mother country, and which have been preserved here, and a few which have been introduced from wantonness or necessity. There is much more difference in intonation, and in the pronunciation of particular words, than in the use of terms unknown to England. The best English is spoken by the natives of the middle States, who are purely the descendants of English parents, without being the descendants of emigrants from New-England. The educated men of all the southern Atlantic States, especially the members of those families which have long been accustomed to the better society of their towns, also speak an English but little to be distinguished from that of the best circles of the mother country. Still there are shades of difference between these very persons, that a nice and practised ear can detect, and which, as they denote the parts of the Union to which they belong, must be called provincialisms. These little irregularities of language solely arise from the want of a capital.

"Throughout all New-England, and among most of the descendants of the people of New-England, the English language is spoken with more or less of an intonation derived, I believe, from the western counties of England, and with a pronunciation that is often peculiar to themselves. They form so large a proportion of the entire population of the country, that some of their provincialisms are getting to form a part of our ordinary language. The peculiarity of the New-England dialect (the term is almost too strong) is most discernible in the manner in which they dwell on the last word of a sentence, or the last syllable of a word. It is not properly drawling, for they speak very quick in common, much quicker than the English; so quick, indeed, as to render syllables frequently indistinct: but, in consequence of the peculiar pause they make on the

last word, I question if they utter a sentence in less time than those who dwell more equally on its separate parts.* Among men of the world and of education, this peculiarity is, of course, often lost but education is so common, and the state of society so simple in New-England, as to produce less apparent distinction in speech and manners than it is usual to find elsewhere.

"Another marked peculiarity of New-England is in the pronunciation of a great many words. The fact that a vast improvement has occurred in this respect within the last thirty years, however, goes to prove the truth of what I have just told you, no less than of the increasing intelligence of the nation.

"When I was a boy, I was sent from a middle State, for my education, to Connecticut. I took with me, of course, the language of my father's house. In the first year I was laughed out of a great many correct sounds, and into a great many vulgar and disagreeable substitutes. At my return home to pass a vacation, I almost threw a sister into fits by calling one of her female friends a 'virtoous *an*-gel,' pronouncing the first syllable of the last word like the article. It was in vain that I supported my new reading by the authorities of *the university*. The whole six weeks were passed in hot discussions between my sister and myself, amidst the laughter and merriment of a facetious father, who had the habit of trotting me through my Connecticut prosody by inducing me to recite Pope's Temple of Fame, to the infinite delight of two or three waggish elder brothers, who had got their English longs and shorts in a more southern school. It was at a time of life when shav-

* The phrase of "I wonder if he did," is very common in New-England. It is usually uttered "I wonder if he de-e-e-e-ed," with a falling of the voice at the last word, to nearly an octave below the rest of the sentence. Sometimes there is more than one resting point, in a sentence of any length.

ing was a delight instead of a torment. I remember they were always sure of drawing me out by introducing the subject of my beard, which I pedantically called *berd;* or, for which, if pushed a little harder than common, I gave them a choice between *berd* and *baird.* Even to this hour, it is rare to find a native of New-England who does not possess some of these marked provincialisms of speech. By a singular corruption, the word *stone* is often pronounced *stun*, while *none* is pronounced *noane*, or nearly like *known.* The latter is almost a shibboleth, as is *nothing*, pronounced according to the natural power of the letters, instead of *nuthing.* I think, however, a great deal of the peculiarity of New-England pronunciation is to be ascribed to the intelligence of its inhabitants. This may appear a paradox; but it can easily be explained. They all read and write; but the New-Englandman, at home, is a man of exceedingly domestic habits. He has a theoretical knowledge of the language, without its practice. Those who migrate lose many of their peculiarities in the mixed multitudes they encounter; but *into* New-England the current of emigration, with the exception of that which originally came from the mother country, has never set. It is vain to tell a man who has his book before him, that *cham* spells *chame*, as in *chamber;* or *an*, *ane*, as in *angel;* or *dan*, *dane*, as in *danger.* He replies by asking what sound is produced by *an*, *dan*, and *cham.* I believe it would be found, on pursuing the inquiry, that a great number of their peculiar sounds are introduced through their spelling-books, and yet there are some, certainly, that cannot be thus explained. It is not too much to say that nine people in ten, in New-England, pronounce *does*, *dooze*, when the mere power of the letters would make it nearer *doze.* There is one more singular corruption, which I shall mention before I go farther south, and which often comes from the mouths of

men, even in Boston, who, in other respects, would not be much criticised for their language: the verb *to show* was formerly, and is even now, spelt *shew*, and *shewed* in its participle; I have heard men of education and manners, in Boston, say, "he *shew* me that," for, he *showed* me that.

"With these exceptions, which are sufficiently numerous, and the hard sound they almost always give the letter *u*, the people of New-England speak the language more like the people of Old-England than any other parts of our country. They speak with a closer mouth, both physically and morally, than those who live further south and west. There is also a little of a nasal sound among some of them, but it is far from being as general as the other peculiarities I have named.

"The middle States certainly speak a softer English than their brethren of the east. I should say, that when you get as far south as Maryland, the softest, and perhaps as pure an English is spoken as is any where heard. No rule on such a subject, however, is without many exceptions in the United States. The emigration alone would, as yet, prevent perfect uniformity. The voices of the American females are particularly soft and silvery; and I think the language, a harsh one at the best, is made softer by our women, especially of the middle and southern States, than you often hear it in Europe.

"New-York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, have each their peculiar phrases. Some of the women have a habit of dwelling a little too long on the final syllables, but I think it is rare among the higher classes of society. I don't know that it exists at all, as far south as Baltimore. As you go further south, it is true, you get a slower utterance, and other slight varieties of provincialism. In Georgia, you find a positive drawl, among what are called the "crackers." More or less of this drawl, and of all the pe-

culiar sounds, are found in the south-western and western States; but they are all too new to have any fixed habits of speech of their own.

"The usual vulgar phrases which are put into the mouths of Americans, are commonly caricatured, though always founded in truth. 'I guess,' is a phrase of New-England. It is used a great deal, though not as often, as 'you know,' by a cockney. It proceeds, I think, from the cautious and subdued habit of speaking which is characteristic of these people. The gentlemen rarely use it, though I confess I have heard it, interlarding the conversation of pretty lips that derived none of their beauty from the Puritans. You see, therefore, that it has been partially introduced by the emigrants into the middle States. Criticism is here so active, just now, that it is rapidly getting into disuse. The New-Yorker frequently says, 'I suspect,' and the Virginian, 'I reckon.' But the two last are often used in the best society in the mother country.*

"The difference in pronunciation and in the use of words, between the really good society of this country and that of England, is not very great. In America, we can always tell an Englishman by what we are pleased to call his provincialisms (and, quite half the time, the term is correct,) I was struck at the close resemblance between the language of the higher classes in the mother country, and the higher classes of my own, especially if the latter belong to the middle States. There are certainly points of difference, but they as often proceed from affectation in individuals, as from the general habits of the two countries. Cockneyisms are quite as frequent in the language of an English gentleman, as provincialisms

* The negroes have a habit of saying, "you sabber dat," for, you know that; can this be one of their African terms, or is it a corruption of "saber," or of "savoir," that has found its way to the continent from the neighbouring islands?

in the mouth of an American gentleman of the middle States. I now use the word gentleman in its strict meaning. I have heard many people of high rank in England, for instance, pronounce 'yours' as if it were spelt 'yers.' If affectations are to become laws, because they are conceived in the smoke of London, then they are right; but, if old usage, the rules of the language, and the voices of even educated men are to prevail, then are they wrong. This is but one among a hundred similar affectations that are detected every day by an attentive and critical ear. But mere rank, after all, is not always a criterion of correct pronunciation in an Englishman or an Englishwoman. I have met with people of rank who have spoken in very perceptible provincial dialects. Parliament is very far from being faultless in its English, putting the Irish, Scotch, and aldermen out of the question. I have heard a minister of state speak of the '*o*-casion,' with a heavy emphasis; and just before we sailed, I remember to have burst into involuntary laughter at hearing a distinguished orator denounce a man for having been the 'recipient of a bribe of ten guineas.' The language of Parliament is undeniably far more correct than that of Congress; but when it is recollected that the one body is a representation of the aristocracy of a condensed community, and the other a representation of the various classes of a widely-spread people, the rational odds is immensely in our favour. I am not sure that one, who took pleasure in finding fault, might not detect quite as many corruptions of the English language in the good society of the mother country, as in the good society of our own. The latter, strictly considered, bears a less proportion to our numbers, however, than the same class bears to the population of England. The amount of the whole subject I take to be simply this: allowing for all the difference in numbers, there is vastly more bad English, and a thousand times more bad gram-

mar spoken in England than in America; and there is much more good English (also allowing for the difference in numbers) spoken there than here. Among the higher and better educated classes, there are purists in both countries, who may write and talk to the end of time; innovations have been made, are made, and will be made in both countries; but as two nations now sit in judgment on them, I think when words once get fairly into use, their triumph affords a sufficient evidence of merit to entitle them to patronage.

TO THE COMTE JULES DE BÉTHIZY,

&c. &c.

Washington, ———

If I have said nothing for a long time, concerning your distinguished countryman, it has not been for want of materials. The *éclat* which attends his passage through the country, is as brilliant as it was the day he landed; but were I to attempt to give you a continuous history of the ceremonies and pageants that grow out of his visit, my letters would be filled with nothing else. One of the former has, however, just occurred here, which may have a particular interest. I shall, therefore, attempt to describe a few of its outlines. Before proceeding to this task, permit me to mention one circumstance, that has struck me with peculiar force, and which I beg you will communicate to our friend the Abbate, when next you write to him.

At Philadelphia, after a triumphal entry, in which something like twenty thousand of the militia were

under arms, the citizens of all classes, according to custom, paid visits of congratulation to their guest, who received them in that famous hall, which has become celebrated for being the place where the separation of a portion of this continent from Europe was first solemnly declared. Among the thousands who crowded around the venerable Frenchman, were all the clergy of the city. They were more than sixty in number, and at their head appeared the Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church, with the Bishop of the Roman Catholic Church at his side. The former, who is a native of the country, and one of its oldest divines, delivered the sentiments of his brethren; but had the latter, who is a foreigner, been of a greater age, and of longer service, he would, undoubtedly, have been selected to have performed the same ceremony. It is much the fashion, in Europe, to say there is no religion in the United States, for no better reason than that there is no church establishment, and, consequently, no exaltation of one particular sect, and a consequent depression of all others. But you will allow there is one evidence of a Christian spirit, that is not always found elsewhere, viz. charity. Although, in theory, all denominations in the United States are equal before the law, there is, in point of fact, no country in the world that is more decidedly Protestant than this, and yet, I do believe, it would give scandal to the whole nation, to learn that a slight, or an offence of any nature, were given to a priest, merely because he happened to belong to the Roman Catholic communion.

La Fayette arrived in Washington some time before the meeting of Congress. He had an appropriate reception from the inhabitants of the district, and was received into the house of the President. But his time was too precious to be unnecessarily lost. All were anxious to see him, and he was, apparently,

just as anxious to see all. Leaving Washington, after a short residence, he paid a visit to Virginia, where he found Jefferson and Madison, the two last Presidents, living in retirement, and where he must also have spent several delightful days on the theatre of that brilliant campaign, where, though but a boy, he foiled all the sagacity and activity of an experienced and enterprising general, (Cornwallis,) and prepared the way for the final and glorious success with which the war of 1776 was terminated.

On his return to this place, it was announced that the House of Representatives intended to give him a public and solemn reception. He was received by the Senate in a simple, and more private, but in an affectionate manner. I was in their hall, on this occasion, and was greatly struck with the quiet dignity of the ceremony. There was a short address, and a simple reply, after which La Fayette was invited to take his seat on the sofa, by the side of the President of the Senate.* He afterwards frequently visited the Senate chamber, to hear the debates, and, on all these occasions, he was seated in the same place. There was something noble, as well as touching, in the sight of a veteran returning to the scene of his services, after a life like that of La Fayette, and of being thus received so familiarly and affectionately into the bosom of the highest legislative body of a nation, that was enjoying a prosperity and ease far exceeding that known to any other people.

On the day of the more public ceremony in the hall of the Representatives, every one was seen mounting the Capitol hill at an early hour. We got places, as usual, on the floor of the house, where we could both hear and see. The galleries were

* The Vice-President of that day, being often indisposed, rarely presided, and a President *pro tem.*, according to a custom, performed his duties. The Vice-President (Mr Tompkins) died soon after.

crowded to overflowing, being filled with fine women and well-dressed men. The body of the house was, of course, occupied by none but the members, while the inner lobbies, or the circular space along the walls, and behind the Speaker's chair, were occupied by those who, of right, or by virtue of sufficient influence, were allowed to enter.

The Speaker of the House of Representatives is a man of singular talents, and of great native eloquence. In person he is tall and spare, and he is far from being graceful in his ordinary air and attitudes. His countenance is one of those in which a pleasing whole is produced by parts that are far from being particularly attractive. In face and form, Mr. Clay (the Speaker) is not unlike the pictures of the last Pitt, nor is he unlike him in the power of addressing public bodies. Notwithstanding these defects of the physique, few men are capable of producing as great an effect as Mr. Clay, when he is placed in situations to exhibit his talents. His gesticulation is graceful, and exceedingly dignified, his utterance slow, distinct, and gentlemanly, and his voice one of the sweetest imaginable.*

At the appointed hour, the doors of the hall were thrown open, and a simple little procession advanced with dignity into the body of the house. It was composed of the Senators of the United States, preceded by a delegation of the lower house, who had been sent to invite them to attend at the approaching ceremony. They were in pairs; the Senators of each State walking together. Forty-eight chairs were placed near the Speaker for their reception, and, after exchanging bows with the members of the lower

* The Attorney-General of the United States (Mr. Wirt) has the sweetest voice the writer ever heard in a public speaker. It is something in the style of that of Mr. Peel, though nothing can be more different than their usual manner of speaking.

house, who were standing, the whole were seated together. As the Senators never wear their hats, the Representatives, on this occasion, took their seats uncovered. A few minutes after, M. George La Fayette and the secretary of the general, were shown into the hall and provided with places.

The doors now opened again, and a deputation of twenty-four members of Congress (one from each State) slowly entered the hall. In their front was La Fayette, supported by their chairman and a representative from Louisiana. The whole assembly rose; the guest was led into the centre of the hall, and then the chairman of the deputation said, in an audible voice,

"Mr. Speaker, your committee have the honour to introduce General La Fayette to the House of Representatives."

A sofa had been placed for La Fayette, and he was now invited to be seated. Both houses resumed their chairs, and the guest occupied his sofa. A short pause succeeded, when the Speaker rose with deliberation and dignity. The instant the tones of his sweet voice were heard in the hall, a silence reigned among the auditors that equalled the stillness of death. La Fayette stood to listen. The address was evidently *extempore*, but it was delivered with the ease of a man long accustomed to rely on himself, in scenes of high excitement. He was evidently moved, though the grace of manner and the command of words were rather heightened than suppressed, by his emotions. I shall endeavour to give you the substance of what he said:

"General,—The House of Representatives of the United States, impelled alike by its own feelings, and by those of the whole American people, could not have assigned to me a more gratifying duty, than that of presenting to you cordial congratulations on the occasion of your recent arrival in this country.

In compliance with the wishes of Congress, I assure you of the very high satisfaction which your presence affords on this early theatre of your glory. Although but few of the members who compose this body, shared with you in the war of our revolution, all have learned from impartial history, or from faithful tradition, a knowledge of the perils, the sufferings, and the sacrifices which you voluntarily encountered, and of the signal services which you performed in America, and in Europe, for an infant, a distant, and an alien people. All feel and own the very great extent of the obligation under which you have placed the nation. But the relations in which you have ever stood to the United States, interesting and important as they have been, do not constitute the only motive for the respect and admiration of this House. Your consistency of character, your uniform devotion to regulated liberty, through all the vicissitudes of a long and arduous life, command its profound admiration. During the recent convulsions of Europe, amidst, no less than after the dispersion of, every political storm, the people of the United States have beheld you, true to your principles, erect in every danger, and cheering, with your well-known voice, the votaries of liberty; a faithful and fearless champion, ready to shed the last drop of that blood which here you had already so freely and so nobly spilt in the same holy cause.

"The vain wish has been sometimes indulged that Providence would allow the patriot to return to his country after death, and to contemplate the changes to which time had given birth. To the American this would have been to view the forest felled, cities built, mountains levelled, canals cut, highways constructed, the progress of the arts, the advancement of learning, and the increase of population.

"General,—Your present visit is a realization of the consoling object of that wish. You stand in the

midst of posterity. Every where you must have been struck with the physical and moral changes which have occurred since you left us. This very city, bearing a name dear to you and to us, has since emerged from the forest which then covered its site. In one thing you behold us unaltered; the sentiment of continued devotion to liberty, and of ardent and profound gratitude to your departed friend, the father of his country, and to you and to your illustrious associates in the field and in the cabinet, for the multiplied blessings which surround us, and for the very privilege which I now exercise of addressing you. This sentiment, now fondly cherished by more than ten millions of people, will be transmitted, with unabated vigour, down the tide of time to the latest posterity, through the countless millions who are destined to inhabit this continent."

During this discourse, La Fayette was visibly affected. Instead of answering immediately, he took his seat, which he retained for a minute, struggling to conquer his feelings; then rising, he replied in English, and with powerful feeling, nearly as follows. I think the slight evidence of a foreign idiom, which his reply contains, adds to its interest.

"Mr. Speaker, and Gentlemen of the House of Representatives—While the people of the United States, and their honourable Representatives in Congress, have deigned to make choice of me, one of the American veterans, to signify in his person their esteem for our joint services and their attachment to the principles for which we have had the honour to fight and bleed, I am proud and happy to share those extraordinary favours with my dear revolutionary companions. Yet, it would be, on my part, uncandid and ungrateful not to acknowledge my personal share in those testimonies of kindness, as they excite in my breast emotions which no words are adequate to express.

"My obligations to the United States, Sir, far exceed any merit I might claim. They date from the time when I have had the happiness to be adopted as a young soldier, a favoured son of America; they have been continued to me during almost half a century of constant affection and confidence; and now, Sir, thanks to your most gratifying invitation, I find myself greeted by a series of welcomes, one hour of which would more than compensate for the public exertions and sufferings of a whole life.

"The approbation of the American people, and of their representatives, for my conduct during the vicissitudes of the European revolution, is the highest reward I could receive. Well may I stand firm and erect, when in their names, and by you, Mr. Speaker, I am declared to have, in every instance, been faithful to those American principles of liberty, equality, and true social order, the devotion to which, as it has been from my earliest youth, so it shall continue to be a solemn duty to my latest breath.

"You have been pleased, Mr. Speaker, to allude to the peculiar felicity of my situation, when, after so long an absence, I am called to witness the immense improvements, the admirable communications, of the prodigious creation of which we find an example in this city, whose name itself is a venerated palladium; in a word, all the grandeur and prosperity of those happy United States, who, at the same time they nobly secure the complete assertion of American independence, reflect on every part of the world the light of a far superior political civilization.

"What better pledge can be given of a persevering national love of liberty, when those blessings are evidently the result of a virtuous resistance to oppression, and of institutions founded on the rights of man and the republican principle of self-government?

"No, Mr. Speaker, posterity has not begun for me, since, in the sons of my companions and friends,

I find the same public feelings, and, permit me to add, the same feelings in my behalf, which I have had the happiness to experience in their fathers.

"Sir, I have been allowed, forty years ago, before a committee of a Congress of thirteen States, to express the fond wishes of an American heart. On this day, I have the honour, and enjoy the delight, to congratulate the representatives of the Union, so vastly enlarged, on the realization of those wishes, even beyond every human expectation, and upon the almost infinite prospects we can with certainty anticipate. Permit me, Mr. Speaker, and Gentlemen of the House of Representatives, to join to the expression of those sentiments, a tribute of my lively gratitude, affectionate devotion, and profound respect."

A deeper silence never pervaded any assembly than that with which the audience listened to this answer. There was so much of nature, of sincerity, and of affection in the manner of the speaker, and quite evidently so little of preparation in the language of his reply, that it produced a vastly greater effect than any studied discourse, however elegant in phraseology and thought.

After a short pause of a few minutes, during which many of the members were manifestly stilling their awakened feelings, the gentleman who had announced La Fayette arose, and impressively moved that the house should now adjourn. The question was put and carried, and then all present, members and spectators, crowded about their guest, to renew welcomes and felicitations which were reiterated for the thousandth time.

I do not know that the Americans have any particular tact in their manner of conducting ceremonies, perhaps, on the contrary, they are not much practised in their mysteries; but, as natural feelings are as little disturbed as possible, I have ever found in the receptions, greetings, and *fêtes* they have given

to La Fayette, a simplicity and touching affection that has gone directly to the heart. The veteran himself has manifested, on all occasions, a wonderful tact and readiness. Notwithstanding the gravity and earnest air he has so often been compelled to encounter, he has, in every instance, managed to strip the ceremony of the stiffness of preparation, and to give to the interviews the warmth and interest that should distinguish a meeting between a parent and his children.

After the business of the morning was ended, Cadwallader and myself joined a small party which continued about the person of La Fayette, whom we accompanied to his lodgings. The heart of the old man was full, and he took an evident delight in recurring to those events of the revolution which redounded to the credit of a people, in whose history and character he seems to take the same pride that a fond father would feel in witnessing the advance of a promising son. During our ride, he mentioned several little circumstances that are worthy of repetition; but the limits of this letter must confine me to two.

In the year 1779 and 1780, La Fayette commanded the light infantry of the American army. Most of the soldiers were natives of New-England, or of the middle States. With these troops he was sent from the north to act against Cornwallis, in that memorable campaign in which he did himself so much honour by his prudence and spirit, and which terminated in the capture of the latter. On reaching Baltimore, the effects of climate, and of a removal from home, became quite apparent on the spirits of his men. They conversed among themselves of the dangers of a summer passed in the low counties of Virginia, and for a few nights there were repeated desertions. It was of the last importance to put a stop to a feeling that threatened destruction to the service. The young Frenchman took counsel of his

own heart, and acted accordingly. He issued a general order, in which he set forth the dangers of the climate, and the hazards and hardships of the contemplated service in the plainest language, concluding by calling on those who felt unequal to the trial to present themselves, in order that they might be embodied and sent back to the main army, since it was absolutely necessary that he should know the precise force on which he might depend. Not a man came forward to claim the promised favour; and, what is far more remarkable, not another desertion occurred. The second anecdote is still more worthy of relation.

Throughout the whole of the war of 1776, the American army was rarely exempted from severe suffering. They had to contend with disease and hunger; were often without shoes, even in winter, and frequently without ammunition.* On one occasion, it is known that famine actually pervaded the grand army while it lay at no great distance in front of general Howe, who was at the head of a powerful and an admirably appointed force. During the campaign of 1780, La Fayette, who, you will remember, was an American general, was joined by a small French force. He continued to command as the senior officer. There was a scarcity in the camp, and it became necessary to resort to severe measures in order to provide for the allies. He boldly issued an order that no American should receive a mouthful until the French soldiers were furnished with full

* The writer made an acquaintance with two veterans of that war, while in America. One of them assured him he marched into the battle of Trenton (he was a lieutenant, and it was in the depth of winter) without a shirt; and the other, who was in the cavalry, assured him, that by charging at the battle of Eutaw into a thicket of black-jacks, (a sort of thorny bush,) where the English infantry had thrown themselves, after the principal rencontre, he lost a far more important vestment, which he was not able to replace, until he luckily found a piece of tow-cloth in the highway.

rations, and for several days the camp exhibited the singular spectacle of one portion of its inmates being full fed, while the other was on an exceedingly limited allowance. What renders the forbearance of the native troops still more worthy of praise, is the fact, that the officer who commanded the dangerous distinction, was a countryman of those who were well fed: yet no man heard a murmur! To me it seems, that the mutual confidence exhibited in this fact, is as creditable to him who dared to issue the order, as to those who knew how to submit to it without complaint.

TO THE PROFESSOR CHRISTIAN JANSEN,

&c. &c.

Washington, ——

—It was a week before I recovered from the shock of such an alarm. But on more mature thought, (especially when I came coolly to reflect on some recent dangers through which I had myself passed in triumph, as well as on the numberless instances in which I had felt symptoms of the same disorder,) I began to consider your cause as far from hopeless. We become more liable to these attacks as we advance in life, and I warn you of being constantly on your guard against them. I also beg leave to recommend exercise and change of scene as the most effectual cure. I am fully persuaded that had not fortune made us all travellers, we should long since have ceased to be the independent beings we are. Waller spoke, in his last letter, of a Venetian beauty,

in language that seemed ominous; but I know too well that deep inward eccentricity of the man, which he so prettily calls *mauvaise honte*, to dread any thing serious from the affair. I think his eminently impartial manner of viewing things, will for ever save him from the sin of matrimony. Besides, the girl is only descended from two doges of the fifteenth century, and four or five old admirals of the thirteenth and fourteenth, a genealogy that surely cannot pretend to compete with the descent of a Somersetshire baronet, whose great-grandfather was an alderman of Lincoln, and whose great-grandmother was the youngest daughter of a British officer. If you doubt the truth of the last circumstance, I refer you to the half-pay list of lieutenants of dragoons, in the reign of George the Second.

You have made a much more formidable request than you appear to think, when you desire that I will give you a detailed account of the system of jurisprudence, of the laws, and of the different courts of this country. The subject, properly and ably considered, would require a year of time, and infinitely more legal science than I can lay claim to possess. Still, as I may tell you some things of which you are as yet a stranger, I shall not shrink from the task of communicating the little I do know, under the stale plea of incompetency.

About a week after our arrival in this place, Cadwallader and myself had descended from the hall of the House of Representatives to the caucus, and we were about to leave the Capitol, when my friend made a sudden inclination to the left, motioning for me to follow. He passed into the basement of the northern wing of the edifice. I had seen but a few minutes before, by the naked flag-staff, that the Senate had adjourned,* and, was about to say as much,

* A flag is kept flying over the wings in which the two houses meet, when they are in session, and they are struck as either

when I observed, that in place of ascending the stairs which led to their chamber, he proceeded deeper into the lower apartments of the wing. Opening a simple door, we entered a spacious, but low and far from brilliant apartment. It was lighted only from one of its sides. Directly in front of the windows, and a little elevated above the rest of the floor, sat seven grave looking men, most of whom had passed the meridian of life. They were clad in simple black silk robes, not unlike those worn by the students of universities, and most of them were busily occupied in taking notes. Immediately in their front, some ten or twelve respectable men were seated, who had nothing in attire to distinguish them from the ordinary gentlemen of the country. There were two or three others who had the air of being inferior *employés* of some grave and important body; though, with the exception of the black silk robes, I saw no other badges of office. On the right, and on the left, there were benches in rows, and perhaps thirty or forty more gentlemen were seated on them, listening to what was said. Among these auditors, there might have been a dozen genteel looking women. This assemblage was composed of the judges, the advocates, the officers, and the suitors of the Supreme Court of the United States. All present who did not come within one or the other of the above-mentioned denominations, were, like ourselves, merely curious witnesses of the proceedings.

We staid an hour listening to the argument of a distinguished advocate. He was a member of Congress from one of the eastern States, and by the simplicity of his language, and the acuteness and force of his thoughts, he was clearly a man who would

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body adjourns. These are signals that enable people at a distance to learn whether the Senate, or lower house, are still together or not.

have done credit to any tribunal in the world. The manner of the speaker was rather cold, but it was dignificd, and he paid the highest compliment to his auditors, by addressing all he said to their reasons. The judges listened with grave attention, and indeed the whole scene wore the air of a calm and a highly reasonable investigation.

My attention was given more to the severe simplicity which marked the aspect and proceedings of this powerful tribunal, than to the particular subject before it. I found high authority again reposing with confidence on the most naked ceremonials, and I again found it surrounded by an air of deep reverence, which proves how little the vulgar auxiliaries of our eastern inventions are necessary to insure it respect and obedience. On no other occasion was I ever so completely sensible of the feebleness of an artificial, or of the majesty of a true, because a natural dignity, as on this. I have heard the wigs, and robes, and badges of office of half the tribunals of Europe laughed at, even by those who become familiar with their absurdities; but I do not know on what the most satirical wit could seize, in a body like this, to turn into ridicule. It is no small proof of the superiority that is obtained by the habit of considering things in their direct and natural aspects, that wigs, and other similar encumbrances, which are heaped upon the human form, with us, in order to heighten respect, in this country are avoided, in order to protect those, who should be venerated, from undeserved ridicule.

Considered in reference to its functions, and to the importance of the trusts which it discharges, the Supreme Court of the United States is the most august tribunal of the world. It may not yet be called upon to decide on causes which involve as great an amount of property, perhaps, as some of the courts of England; but, as the wealth and power of this country

shall increase with its growth, the matters it decides will become still greater; and it now produces a mighty influence on the interests of the whole Union. You will better understand the subject, if we take a rapid view of the judicial system of the confederation, as it is connected with those of the several States.

You already know that the theory of the American government assumes that all power is the natural and necessary right of the people. The accidental circumstances of colonization had thrown the settlers into a certain number of bodies politic, before the era of their revolution. Until that event arrived, each province was entirely distinct and independent of all the others, except as they had common relations through their allegiance to the crown of England, and through those commercial and general interests which united them as the subjects of the same empire.

For the purpose of achieving their independence, the different provinces entered into a compact which partook of the nature of an intimate and indissoluble alliance. The articles of the confederation were a sort of treaty, that was not, however, limited to definite, but which embraced general objects, and which was to know no limits to its duration, but such as necessity must put to all things. Still it was little more than an intimate alliance between thirteen separate and independent governments. Money was to be raised for avowed and general purposes; but it was done in the way of subsidies rather than of taxation. Each State collected its own resources in its own manner, and it had fulfilled most of its obligations to the confederation when it had paid its quota, and when it permitted the few public agents appointed by the Congress to discharge the particular trusts that were delegated to the Union.

Notwithstanding this imperfect and clumsy organization of their general government, the inhabitants of the United States were, even at that early day, essentially the same people. They had the same views of policy, the same general spirit, substantially the same origin,* and a community of interests that constantly invited a more intimate association. The country was scarcely relieved from the pressure and struggle of the war of the revolution, before its wisest citizens began to consider the means of effecting so desirable an object. Peace was concluded in 1783; and, in 1787, a convention was called to frame a constitution for the United States. The very word *constitution* implies the control of all those interests which distinguish an identified community. If we speak with technical accuracy, the convention of 1787 was assembled for the purpose of improving an existing compact, rather than for the purpose of creating one entirely new. But it will simplify our theory, and answer all the desirable purposes of the present object, if we assume that the States entered into the bargain perfectly unencumbered by any pre-existing engagements.

Under this view of the case, each State possessed all the rights of a distinct sovereignty, when it sent its delegates to the convention. There was no power which of necessity belongs to any other government of the world, that each of these States could not of itself exercise, subject always to the restrictions of its own institutions and laws. But then, each State possessed the power of altering its own institutions as it saw fit; it had its own laws, its own tribunals, and it preserved its policy in all things, except that, in point of fact, by the ancient confederation, it was

* A gross error exists in Europe, on the subject of the mixed character of this people. The whole population of Louisiana, for instance, but a little exceeded 75,000 souls (blacks included,) in 1810. It was ceded to the Union in 1804.

bound not to enter into wars, and certain other engagements, with foreign nations, without the rest of the States being parties to the transaction.

The constitution of 1787 wrought a vital change in this system. The Americans now became one people in their institutions, as well as in their origin and in their feelings. It is important to remember that the two latter induced the former circumstance, and not the former the latter.

You can readily imagine that the principal point to be decided in a body which had professedly assembled with such intentions, was that of the continuation or annihilation of the State governments. There were not a few in favour of the first policy, though the influence of those who supported the authority of the States happily prevailed. I say happily, since, I think, it can be made plain that the existence of the Union at the present hour, no less than its future continuance, is entirely dependent on the existence of the government of the several States.

In consequence of the policy that prevailed, a species of mixed and complicated government was established, which was before unknown to the world, but which promises to prove that territory may be extended *ad libitum* without materially impairing the strength of a country by its extent. It strikes me, that as the confederation of the United States is the most natural government known, that it is consequently the only empire on whose stability the fullest confidence can be placed. It is a superstructure regularly reared on a solid foundation, and not a tower from which a number of heavy and ill-balanced dependants are suspended. As to the prognostics of its dissolution, they are founded on theories that are getting to be a little obsolete; and the best argument that is urged to prove their truth, after all, is merely the fact that the confederation of the United States has not existed more than the full term of fifty years

during the last half century. Perhaps it may console these impatient reasoners to know, that, while the records of the country are certainly limited to the brief period named, so far as improvement, wealth, power, and a general advancement are concerned, it has every appearance of having been in existence two or three centuries.

In order to effect the material objects of the new confederation, it became necessary that the States should part freely with their power. The principle was adopted that every thing which was necessary to the general welfare should be yielded to the general government, while the States should, of course, retain all the rest of their authority. But, with a view to give the utmost efficiency to the new system, an executive, courts, and subordinate functionaries were created, who were to act on the people sometimes through, but oftener without, the intermediate agency of the State authorities. As our present business is with the courts, we will confine ourselves to that branch of the subject.

Although the several States preserve the outlines of the judicial institutions which they inherited from their ancestors, there are not, probably, two in the whole confederation whose forms of jurisprudence are precisely the same. There is necessarily a difference in the policy of a large State and the policy of a small one; in that of a large, *new* State and that of a large *old* one; in that of a State without and in that of a State with slaves; in a commercial and in a purely agricultural State; and, in short, in a society which exists under the direct influence of certain interests, and in a society which exists under the influence of certain others. You may trace in this power of accommodating their minute policy to their own particular condition, and, what is probably quite as important, to their own pleasure, one of the great reasons for the durability of the Union.

Had I the necessary knowledge to impart it, you would not possess the patience to read a detailed account of the shades of difference which exist in the jurisprudence of twenty-four separate communities. I shall therefore take the outline of that of New-York, the most populous of the States, and point out its connexion with that of the Union. It will be sufficiently exact to give you an idea of the whole.

The foundation of the laws of New-York, is the common law of England. Some of the provisions of this law, and a few of its principles, have been destroyed by the constitution of the State, which, of course, has substituted the maxims of a republic for those of a monarchy. Statute law has changed, and is daily changing certain other decrees of the common law, which are found to be inapplicable to the peculiar state of this society. I know no better evidence of the boldness and usefulness of reform, as it exists in this country, than is to be found in the early changes they made in the common law. It is now near half a century since they destroyed the right of entail, the trial by battle, the detestable and unnatural law of the half-blood, and a variety of other similar usages that are just beginning to become obnoxious to European censure. The Americans themselves say that New-York has still a great deal to do, and daily complaints are heard against impediments to justice, which are to be traced to the usages of a comparatively dark age.*

The lowest tribunal known to the laws, is what is

* There are people who may find it curious to know, that the advancement of public opinion, and the consequent security of liberty, is making bold inroads on those practices which are known to have given birth to political rights. In the State of Louisiana, and, the writer believes, in one or two others, the use of a jury is dispensed with, in all civil cases, in which it is not demanded by one of the parties. It is said that more than five-sixths of the civil actions are tried by the court. Still the *right* of a trial by jury is guarantied by the constitution of the United States.

called a justices' court, or the suits before a justice of the peace. In each county there is also a regular court for the trial of criminal causes, and for the common pleas of that county. The presiding officers of these courts are termed judges; they are commonly five in number, and are sometimes aided by what are called assistant justices. In the older counties these judges are usually men of education, and always men of character. They are frequently lawyers, who continue to practise in the higher courts, and they are often men of landed estate, yeomen of good characters and influence, and sometimes merchants. Their criminal duties are not unlike those of the quarter sessions in England. Executions in civil actions issued out of this court, take effect on all property found within the limits of the county, and judgments are liens on real estate, according to priority of date, without reference to the courts where any other similar claims may be recorded.

The State is next subdivided into judicial circuits. For each of these circuits there is one judge. This officer presides at the circuit courts, assisted by the judges of the county; and as the judgments obtained under verdicts in this court are perfected before the supreme court of the State, they have a lien on all property belonging to the party concerned within the bounds of the State. Both of these courts take cognizance of crimes.

The supreme court (of the State of New-York) is composed of three judges. They constitute a court of law, to which appeals are made from the inferior tribunals. The judges do not regularly preside at any of the circuits, though it is within the scope of their powers to do so if they please.* They settle all causes,

* There has been a recent change in the courts of New-York. A few years since there were five judges of the supreme court, and they tried all causes at Nisi Prius, holding the circuits in person. It was found that the business accu-

and the reports of their proceedings form the ordinary books of precedents.

There is a chancellor who hears and decides in all cases where equity is claimed, and who exercises the usual authority in granting injunctions against the consummation of proceedings at law. In many of the States, the equitable power is lodged in the same courts as the legal, the judges hearing causes on what is termed the equity side. The chancellor of the State is purely a law officer, exercising no other functions, and holding his commission by the same tenures as the judges. In one or two of the States, however, the governor acts as chancellor.

The Senate of the State, (of New-York,) assisted by the chancellor and judges of the Supreme Court, form a tribunal for appeals, and for the correction of errors in the last resort. Their decision is final, unless the defendant should happen to be a foreigner, or a citizen of another State, in which case the cause can be carried into the courts of the United States* under certain circumstances. This court is not known to many of the States.

The jurisdiction of the courts of a State, embraces most of the ordinary interests of life. Nearly all offences against persons and things, whether considered in reference to the protection of the individual, or in

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mulated, and, in order to repair the evil, the circuit judges were appointed; those of the supreme court were reduced in number, and the common duties of the latter were limited to the terms. The better opinion in the State is, that this departure from a practice which has been sanctioned by so many centuries is not successful. A return to the former system is already contemplated, with an increase of the judges, that shall make their whole number equal to the labour they have to undergo.

* The plaintiff, being an alien, or a citizen of another State, can do the same thing in the first stages of the suit. But it is impossible to be minute in a work like this; the writer merely aims at giving a general idea of the system of the jurisprudence of the United States.

reference to the dignity and security of society, can be tried before some one of the tribunals mentioned. In many cases the tribunals have concurrent power, those of the United States always being supreme, when they have a right to interfere at all.

The lowest tribunal established by the United States is that of the district courts. The rule is to make each State a district for the trial of causes under the laws of the Union, though some of the larger States are divided into two. Each of these courts has its particular judge, its recording, and its executive officers. The latter are called marshals; they exercise all the ordinary duties of an English sheriff.* Original causes are tried before the district judge. If A. should fail in the conditions of an ordinary contract made with B., the latter would bring his suit in the county in which the former resided, or in the supreme court of the State, as he might please; but if the contract had direct reference to matter which is exclusively controlled by the laws of the United States, he would probably bring his action in the circuit court of the State in which the defendant lived. In matters that arise from seizures under the customs, or that affect any other of the direct interests of the United States, the *District Court* is always competent to proceed. If process issues on execution from the courts of the State, it is to the sheriff; but from the United States' courts it is directed to the marshal. The same distinction is observed for the execution of sentences under the respective criminal laws of the two authorities. Thus, it would be possible, as in the cases of an ordinary murder and of piracy, for two convicts to issue from the same gaol, and to go to the same gallows, though the one should be hanged under the orders of a sheriff, and the other under the orders of a marshal. Though

* Each county has a sheriff under the laws of the State.

there are no points of collision, in matters of mere dignity, the marshal is a man of more importance than a sheriff, inasmuch as his bailiwick embraces a whole State instead of a county; and he executes the supreme law of the land, though, in fact, his functions are often limited to a course of concurrent, or rather to a division of familiar powers.*

Each State also forms a district for the circuit courts of the United States. At the circuit, a judge of the supreme court of the United States presides, assisted by the judge of the district. They hear original cases, and such appeals as, by law, can be brought from the tribunals of the State. It frequently happens, that actions affecting parties residing in different States, are brought in the courts of a particular State, because the property in dispute lies there, and the defendant then carries his appeal to one of the circuit courts of the United States. You will see that, of necessity, the laws of the several States must be known to the judges of these circuits, as a great deal of their power goes no further than to take care that these laws shall not infringe on the rights which are guarantied by the confederation.

The judges of the supreme court of the United States sit once a year, to hear appeals and questions of law. They have all the equity powers which are necessarily incident to justice, there being no chancellor of the United States. Their decisions are final, no appeal lying to any other body of the land. This dignified and powerful tribunal not only decides on the interests of individuals, but on the interests of

* The United States have, as yet, no gaols. There is such perfect understanding between the two authorities, that the States lend their gaols, court-rooms, &c. to the officers of the United States, though it is probable that, ere long, provision will be made for both. A convict, sentenced to hard labour by a court of the United States, is sent to the Penitentiary of the State where he is convicted, the former defraying any excess of expense over the fruits of his earnings.

States. Communities that are, even now, larger than the smallest kingdoms of Europe, can come before them, in their corporate capacity, as suitors and defendants.

The affairs of this immensely important tribunal, have ever been conducted with surprising dignity and moderation. The judges are amenable to public opinion, the severest punishment and the tightest check in a free community, and their corruption can be punished by impeachment. An instance of the latter occurred during high party times, and while the doctrines of Europe were more in fashion than they are at present, but the accused was not found guilty.

The duties of the supreme court are often of a highly delicate nature, but the judges have contrived to create a great degree of reverence for, and of confidence in, their decisions. As the population of the country increases, the number of the judges will be increased to meet its wants.*

You know that steam was first successfully applied to boats in America. The celebrated Fulton obtained a law (in the State of New-York) creating a monopoly of its use in his favour for a term of years. At first, the experiment was deemed so hazardous, that he enjoyed this exclusive right without molestation. But, when the immense profits of the speculation became apparent, men began to question the legality of the monopoly. Boats were built without the consent of the assignees of Fulton. The chancellor of the State of New-York, regarding the act of his own legislature, granted an injunction, prohibiting their use. The parties then joined issue, and the case was carried through the courts of the State, until it reached the Court of Errors, where it was decided in favour of the law of the State. New parties appealed to the circuit court of the United States, as citizens

* It has recently been raised to nine.

of another State, and as citizens claiming the protec tion of the laws of the confederacy. It was contended that the law of New-York was unconstitutional, inasmuch as the States had conceded the right to protect inventions, &c. &c. to the general government, and that no State had a right to grant a monopoly on waters, that might interfere with the commerce of the whole country. So the supreme court decided, and, since that decision, there has been an end of the monopoly. Many of the States have enacted laws, of different natures, that have always been treated with great reflection and candour, but which have been as effectually destroyed by this court.

In respect of mere dignity, the judges of the supreme court of the United States stand foremost over all others. A judge of the district court is, as a rule, perhaps, about equal to a judge of the supreme court of a State, though these parallels are entirely arbitrary. In point of variety of power, the judges of the States have much the most; but, in point of importance, those of the United States are the greatest, since appeals can be made to, but not from, them.

You can easily imagine that numberless questions of jurisdiction between the courts of the confederation and those of the States, still remain to be decided. Although the laws of the United States, when constitutional, are called supreme, yet there are points where the two authorities must of necessity meet. To take a strong case, the life of the citizen is, in most instances, to be protected by the laws of the State; but it is possible to conceive a case in which some of the rights that are fairly enough incidental to the discharge of the powers ceded to the United States, might impair the force of a State law for the protection of the life of its citizen. In such a case reason must decide the limits of the two authorities, as it has had to decide the limits of concurrent authorities elsewhere. It would be folly to say always

that the United States law being paramount, should prevail. In fact, in such questions, it is not supreme, even in theory; for the States, having reserved to themselves all the power they have not expressly yielded to the United States, have clearly the same claim to the rights incidental to the powers reserved, as the United States possess to the rights incidental to the powers which have been conceded. The courts of the States (which are bound to know and respect the authority of the United States) might have a natural leaning to extend these incidental powers, and it is in fixing their limits that the supreme court of the United States, which is placed above all petty and local interests, exhibits most of is usefulness and majesty.

A species of natural law is growing up under this system, that promises to be eminently useful, inasmuch as it is adapted to actual necessity. I am a great venerator of those laws which are enacted by custom, since I entertain the opinion that the stamp of usage is worth a dozen legislative seals, especially in a community where men, being as free as possible, have every opportunity of consulting the useful.

The States have conceded all power to Congress to regulate commerce. Now, Congress has jurisdiction over more than twenty degrees of latitude. It has not, however, yet seen fit to establish quarantine regulations for the numerous ports within its jurisdiction, though it is scarcely possible to imagine any measure which more intimately affects commerce than these laws. But the States do continue to pass quarantine laws, under their natural right to protect the lives of their citizens. Should any State, under this plea, attempt to pass such laws, however, as would operate unjustly towards another State, the court of the United States might then pronounce a decision affecting the question. There is as yet a divided opinion, in theory, on the subject of this

right, while the practice is just what it ought to be; that is to say, those who are most familiar with the subject provide for its wants, and should any abuses arise, there is a power in the country competent to put them down.

As its institutions get matured by time, the power of the confederation is every day receiving strength. A vast deal of constitutional law, however, remains to be decided; but as new cases arise, the ability to make discreet decisions, grows with experience. Laws are enacted to meet the regulations necessary to the common good, and as the legislators are themselves citizens of the States to be governed, and one body of them (the Senate) are the legal protectors of their corporate rights, there is little fear that the general government will ever reach that point of authority that shall make it weak, by setting it up in opposition to a force that it would vainly strive to subdue. It may appear paradoxical, but the secret of the actual durability of this confederation consists in its apparent weakness. So long as the influence of the several States shall be of sufficient importance to satisfy their jealousy, I think it will endure; and so long as the present representative system shall prevail, there is every motive to believe the States will possess, with a reasonable portion of the power, a share in all the honour, and the profit, and the security of being members of an Union that must shortly stand foremost among the nations of the earth.

The true balance of power, which elsewhere is found to exist in the hands of individuals, exists here in the hands of legislative bodies, who are the direct representatives of those whose interests are controlled by the government.

TO SIR EDWARD WALLER, BART.

&c. &c.

Washington, ———

A GREAT event has just been decided in this city. The ceremony of the election of a President of the United States, for the four years which shall commence on the fourth day of March next, took place yesterday. The circumstances which led to the peculiar forms of this choice, the characters of the candidates, and the probable result that it will have on the policy of the country, may not be without interest to one who studies mankind as generally as yourself.

The first President, you know, was Washington. He was succeeded by the Vice-President, the elder Adams.* At the end of four years, a hot contest occurred between Mr. Adams and Mr. Jefferson, the President and Vice-President of the day, for the chair. In order to give you a proper understanding of the case, it will be necessary to explain the law for the election to this high office.

You know that the sovereignty of the States is represented by the Senate. Thus, Rhode Island, with 70,000 inhabitants, has two members in the Senate, as well as New-York with 1,700,000. But the members of the lower house, which is the connecting link between the States, are apportioned

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* An absurd story is told by a recent traveller, or a pretended traveller, in the United States, concerning the wish of Mr. Adams, *when Vice-President*, to have the title of "Highness, and Protector of our Liberties," given to the President of the United States. It is said he introduced a resolution to that effect in the *Senate*. Now, it happens, independently of the gross folly of the title, that the *Vice-President*, who is merely a presiding officer, has no right to introduce any law or resolution into the *Senate* at all.

according to the population. The State of Rhode Island has, therefore, two Representatives, and the State of New-York thirty-four. In all ordinary cases of legislation, each individual, whether a Senator or a Representative, gives one vote. While New-York has, consequently, eighteen times more influence in the lower house than Rhode Island, in the upper house they are equal. It is in this division of power that another system of the checks and balances of this government is to be traced.

For the election of the President, bodies are especially convened that are at other times unknown to the constitution. They are called electoral colleges, of which there are as many as there are States. These colleges are composed of citizens chosen in each State, in such a manner as its own laws may prescribe. They are sometimes elected by the legislatures, sometimes in districts by the people, and sometimes again by the people in what is called a general ticket; that is to say, every citizen votes for the whole of the electors that his State is entitled to choose. The number is determined by the population of the State. The number of Representatives is added to the two Senators, and the amount forms the body of the electors. Thus New-York, having thirty-four Representatives and two Senators, chooses thirty-six electors; while Rhode Island, having but two of each class, is limited to four electors.

Within a certain number of days after their own election, the electors of each State meet at some indicated place, and form the several colleges. The time is fixed at so short a period as to prevent, as much as possible, the danger of corruption. There is undoubtedly a preconcert between parties, and an understanding in the way of pledges; but there cannot well be any direct bribery on the part of powerful individuals. Each elector gives one vote for President, and another for Vice-President. As the

constitution formerly stood, the citizen who received the greatest number of votes, provided they made more than half of the whole number, was chosen for the former office, and the citizen who received the next greatest number, under the same provision, was chosen for the latter office. The constitution has, however, been changed, so as to make it necessary that each vote should express for which officer it is given. These votes are counted in the presence of the college, and of any body else who may choose to attend, and the result is properly authenticated and sent to the Department of State; the President of the Senate opens and compares the returns in the presence of both houses of Congress, after which the result is officially announced to the country. But as the votes of each State are known the day they are actually given, the public press uniformly anticipat.. the public documents by several weeks. If there should be no election, the final choice is referred to Congress.

In 1801, the contest between Mr. Adams and Mr Jefferson had a singular termination. Mr. Pinckney, of South Carolina, was the candidate for the Vice-Presidency, supported by the friends of the former; and Mr. Burr, of New-York, the candidate supported by the friends of the latter. Adams was the head of what was called the federal party, and Jefferson the head of the democrats.* The election of 1801 was

* A singular mistake is prevalent in Europe, concerning the origin and objects of the two great political parties, which, for twenty years, nearly equally divided the people of the United States. It is often asserted, and sometimes believed, that the federalists were the secret friends of a monarchy, and that the democrats were, what their name would imply, the only friends of the people. The gross absurdity of this belief is completely exposed. by the fact, that a great majority of the people of New-England and of New-York were, for a long time, federalists; and it is difficult to conceive that the mass of communities, so completely republican in practice, should entertain a *secret* wish to overthrow institutions which they had been the

the first triumph of the democrats. Mr. Adams and Mr. Pinckney were both handsomely defeated; but, by an oversight of the electors, Jefferson and Burr received the same number of votes in the colleges.

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first to form, and which were so completely confirmed by long habit. Washington was, undoubtedly, a federalist, as, indeed, were a very large proportion of the ancient officers and patriots of the revolution. But this party was more lukewarm in the cause of the French revolution, than the other, and its members were the advocates of a rather stronger government than the democrats. It is also true, that, as some of its leaders acknowledged more of the maxims of the ancient monarchy than their opponents, all those who had a bias in favour of the mother country joined their ranks, and served to keep alive an impression which their enemies, of course, industriously circulated, that the party leaned to aristocracy. It was easy to raise this cry, both for the reasons named, and because a large proportion of the men of wealth in the middle and eastern States, were enrolled in its ranks. But there can be no greater absurdity than to suppose, that any party has existed in America, since the revolution, with an intention of destroying, or, indeed, with the intention of seriously modifying, the present form of government. When the constitution was formed, and before all its principles were settled by practice, it was to be expected that men should differ on the subject of the *degree* of change that was prudent; but, as early as the year 1800, the federalists and the democrats were, essentially, nothing more than two great parties, struggling for place, and who adopted different politics about as much for the purpose of opposition as for any other reason. This got to be eminently the case a few years later, when the federal party grew desperate in the minority, and lost sight of character altogether, in the conduct it pursued on the subject of the war with England. Some of the eastern politicians, during that war, believing the moment favourable to a final effort, concerted a plan, by which the whole of the eastern, and some of the middle States were to unite in an attack on the policy of the general government, the result of which was to be the expulsion of the administration. This plan gave rise to the famous Hartford Convention. The opponents of the Hartford Convention accused its founders of a design to divide the Union. It is difficult to say what crude projects may have floated in the heated brains of individuals of that body, but this is a country in which individuals do less than elsewhere, especially in matters of great moment. The New-England States themselves would never have encouraged a scheme so destructive to their own interests; but, had they entertained the wish, it would have been a mad policy without the connivance of New-York, a State that was then, and has been since, daily

This left the question of the presidency to be still decided, as the constitution then prescribed that the choice should be in favour of the candidate who had the greatest number of votes, provided always that he had a majority of the whole number.

The choice of a President, by the provisions of the constitution, now devolved on Congress. In the event of a referred election, the Senators have no voices, the Representatives of each State in the lower house giving but one vote; so that the final decision is made by the States, and not by the people. In 1810, there were sixteen States in the confederation. By a singular coincidence, two of these States had a tie in themselves; so that they defeated their own votes; and of the remainder, eight gave their votes

draining them of their population, and which already numbers nearly, if not quite, as many souls as all New-England united. It is well known that the great body of the federalists of New-York refused to join the convention, even with a view to remonstrate, at the time when the country was engaged single-handed against England. The best evidence of what would have been the fate of an attempt to separate the Union, is to be found in the fact that the people of New-England themselves treat with great coldness, the principal members of the Hartford Convention, although most men acquit them of entertaining so mad a scheme. But the federal party was destroyed by the policy it pursued in the war. The Hartford Convention was its dying effort, and its last moments were as impotent as those of any other worn-out nature. The older members of the party sometimes act together, now, from habit and intimacy, but the generation that is just appearing on the stage, already read of the party struggles in which their fathers were engaged as matters of history. There is no such party known in the United States, as a party unfriendly to their institutions, though, doubtless, there are still a few men living who retain some of their ancient attachment for the sort of government under which they were born. It is worthy of remark, that the children of these men are almost always decided democrats, and in many instances, the complete success of the confederative system has overcome the prejudices of old and bigoted tories. It must be remembered, also, that though a majority of the people of Massachusetts, Connecticut, &c. were willing to try the experiment of the Hartford Convention, there were powerful minorities in every State concerned, without counting the influence of all the rest of the Union.

for Mr. Jefferson and six for Mr. Burr. You should be told that the same law which referred this question to Congress requires that the successful candidate should have a majority of *all* the States. Mr. Jefferson, therefore, required nine votes for success, which was the number necessary to make a majority of sixteen.

The members of Congress voted thirty-five times on this interesting question, and always with the same result. At length, a member or two belonging to the States which had lost their votes by a tie, changed their minds, and gave their voices for Jefferson. This decided the matter, and placed that distinguished statesman in the chair for the next four years. At the expiration of the regular period of service, he was re-elected; but, imitating the example of Washington, he retired at the end of his second term.

Until now the Vice-President had been the successor of the President: but although Mr. Burr, having the next greatest number of votes, was necessarily Vice-President for the first of Mr. Jefferson's terms of office, he was superseded at the second election. The constitution had been altered so as to stand as at present, making it necessary to indicate the situation it is intended the candidate shall fill. A veteran of the revolution, but a man past the expectation of further preferment, had been selected to supply the place of Mr. Burr. The friends of the administration now turned their eyes on the Secretary of State, as a successor to the President of the day. This gentleman (Mr. Madison) was elected, and a sort of change in the descent of power was effected. After a service of two terms, Mr. Madison also retired, and the Secretary of the time being (Mr. Monroe) became the successful candidate. The second term of this gentleman's service is now near its close, and he retires too, as a matter of course. You are not to suppose that the constitution prescribes any other limits

to the presidency of an individual, but that of a new election every four years; but the example of Washington, and, perhaps, the period of life to which all the Presidents have attained, after filling the chair for two terms, have induced them, in succession, to decline elections for a third.

On the present occasion, an entirely new state of politics presents itself. The old party distinctions of federalists and democrats are broken down, and the country is no longer divided into two great political factions. Mr. Adams, the Secretary of State (and a son of the second President,) is considered by a great number of people as the natural and the best successor to Colonel Monroe. When I say natural, you must confine the meaning of the word to a natural expediency, and not to any natural right. His claims consist of a long experience in the politics of the country, great familiarity with foreign diplomacy, and the intimate connexion that he has so long had with the particular measures of the existing administration. He is a man of extensive acquirements, great honesty, and unquestionable patriotism. He is also a northern, or, as it would be expressed here, an eastern man (coming from New-England;) and hitherto Virginia has given four out of the five Presidents. But the circumstance of birth-place has far less influence than you would suppose in a government like this. It is worthy of remark, that while Europeans are constantly predicting sectional divisions in this country, the people of the country themselves appear to think very little about them. Mr. Adams has both a warm support and a warm opposition in the northern States, it being evident that men follow the bent of their humours or judgments, without thinking much on the question of north and south. It is an important circumstance, which always should be remembered in considering this subject, that though the south has, in consequence of its physical inferiority

and peculiar situation, a jealous watchfulness of the north, that the north regards the south with no such feelings. It is clear that the sentiment must be active enough in both to induce men to overlook their interests, before it can produce any important changes.

Mr. Crawford, the Secretary of the Treasury, was another candidate for the Presidency; Mr. Calhoun, the Secretary of War, was a third; Mr. Clay, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, a fourth; and General Jackson, a Senator of Tennessee, was a fifth.

The two first of these gentlemen sit in the cabinet with Mr. Adams, and present the singular spectacle of men united in administering the affairs of the nation, openly and honourably opposed to each other in a matter of the greatest personal interest.

Mr. Crawford was for a long time thought to be the strongest candidate. He is said to have been a man admirably qualified to fill the high station to which he aspired; but a paralytic attack had greatly weakened his claims, before the meeting of the colleges. His friends, too, had committed a vulgar blunder, which is more likely to be fatal here than in any country I know. They commenced their electioneering campaign by bold assertions of their strength, and the most confident predictions of success. I have heard a hundred men of independence and of influence say that disgust, at having themselves disposed of in this cavalier manner, disinclined them to a cause that they might otherwise have been induced to support. It is the opinion of Cadwallader that Mr. Crawford would not have succeeded, had his health not so unhappily suffered. He was but little known to the northern States, and men of character and talents always choose to have at least the air of judging for themselves. He succeeded, however, in receiving enough votes to include his name among the three highest candidates, and con-

sequently he came before Congress on the final question.

Mr. Calhoun, who is still a young man, and who probably aimed as much as any thing at getting his name prominently before the nation, to be ready for a future struggle, prudently withdrew from the contest. As he is universally admitted to be a man of high talents, he was put up, in opposition to the celebrated Albert Gallatin, for the Vice-Presidency; and as that gentleman declined the election, Mr. Calhoun was chosen by the colleges nearly unanimously.

Mr. Clay had many warm friends, and was supported by his own State (Kentucky) with great zeal; but he failed in getting his name included on the list of the three highest. He is a self-created man, of unquestionable genius, and of a manner and eloquence that will always render him formidable to his opponents, and of immense value to his political friends. His direct interest in this election, however, ceased, of necessity, with the returns of the colleges.

General Jackson is a gentleman who has long been employed in offices of high trust in his own State, but who only came prominently before the nation during the late war. He is a lawyer by education, and has filled the civil stations of a judge, a member of Congress, and, lastly, of a Senator. In early life he served as a soldier, during the struggle for independence; but he was much too young to be distinguished. As a military man, his merit is unquestionable. He led two or three difficult expeditions against the Indians of the south with great decision and effect, and with an uniformity of success that has been rare indeed against the savages of this continent. In consequence of the skill and energy he displayed on these occasions as a general of militia, he received a commission in the regular army, soon after the declaration of war against Great Britain. Fortunately, he was

chosen to defend New-Orleans against the formidable attack of that country. He was lying a short distance above the town, with a small body of men,* when it was unexpectedly announced that the enemy had landed at a point, whence a forced march of two or three hours would put them in possession of the place. Mustering as many of his motley troops as he could spare from other points of defence, (something less than sixteen hundred men,) he led them to the attack against a regular and much superior force, whom he attacked with a spirit and effect which left an impression that he was far stronger than the truth would have shown. By this bold measure, he gained time to throw up entrenchments and to receive reenforcements. Before his works were completed, or one-half of the necessary troops had arrived, the British risked the celebrated attack of the 8th of January. They were repulsed with horrible slaughter to themselves, and with an impunity to the defendants that was next to a miracle. The works were entered at an incomplete point; but all who presented themselves were either slain or captured. The great modesty of the account of his success given by General Jackson, is as worthy of commendation as was his indomitable resolution. Contrary to the usage of the times, he gave his opinion that the loss of the enemy was several hundreds less than what they acknowledged it to be themselves, and, indeed, nearly a thousand less than what further observation gave him reason to believe it actually was. If the decision of this extraordinary man was so brilliantly manifested in the moment of need, his subsequent

* Less than three thousand men. As late as the 29th December, General Jackson, in an official letter, states his whole force at three thousand effectives. In the report of the battle of the 8th January, he says, that though a detachment of Kentucky militia had arrived, they added but very little to his force, as most of them were unarmed.

prudence is worthy of the highest commendation. Although he had not hesitated an instant to attack nearly twice his force on the open plain, when nothing short of desperate courage could save the town, he did not allow success to lure him from a position which experience had shown he could maintain. He suffered his beaten, but still greatly superior enemy to retire unmolested; and it is probable that, had they asked for succour, he would cheerfully have yielded them assistance to embark.*

* The force with which General Jackson defended New-Orleans, according to the official returns, was less than 6000 men, imperfectly armed and organized: and all of whom, with the exception of a few marines and sailors, and two battalions of new levies for the army, in all about one thousand men, were the citizens of the country. It is believed that, sailors and marines included, General Packenham landed nearly ten thousand men. It would be a curious study, to those who had any desire to sift the truth, to examine the documents of England and America in relation to the events of their two wars. The writer must say he has met many Americans who are familiar with the documents of England, but he never yet met one Englishman who was familiar with those of America. Nations lose nothing by looking a little closely into their own affairs, as well as into those of other people. One circumstance first drew the writer into a closer investigation of these subjects, than he might otherwise have been induced to undertake. He will relate it.

It is well known that, in 1814, a bloody battle was fought near the great cataract of Niagara. The American general says, that a brigade of his army met a portion of the British army, and engaged it. That he arrived with reenforcements, the enemy reenforcing at the same time; that he was much annoyed by certain pieces of artillery, stationed on an eminence that formed the key of the English position; that he carried this hill at the point of the bayonet, and captured the artillery; that the enemy made three desperate attempts to regain the position and their guns, in all of which they were defeated, and that they finally relinquished the attempt. He gives his enemy a small superiority of force, and he conveys an implied censure against the officer third in command, (he and his second in command having been obliged to retire, from their wounds,) for not securing the fruits of this victory on the morning succeeding the day of the battle. So much for the American. On the other hand, the English general gives a sufficiently similar account of the commencement of the battle. He also admits the charge up the hill, that "our artillerymen were bayoneted by the enemy in the act of loading;" that "our troops having for a moment

General Jackson obtained immense popularity in the country by this brilliant success. His political honesty is unquestionable, and his patriotism without a blot. Still his want of experience in matters of state, and even his military habits, were strongly urged against him. The former may be a solid objection, but, it is more than absurd, it is wicked to urge the military character of a citizen, who meritoriously leaves his retirement in the hour of danger to carry those qualities with which nature has endowed him, into the most perilous, and commonly the least requited service of his country, as an argument against his filling any station whatever. A thousand falsehoods have been circulated at the expense of General Jackson, and even some admitted inequality of temper has been grossly exaggerated. Notwithstanding the industry and affected contempt of the adversaries of this gentleman, he received more of the electoral votes than the highest of the three candidates in the returned list.

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been pushed back, some of our guns remained for a few minutes in the enemy's hands;" that they were, however, soon recovered; and that, instead of his making attacks for the recovery of the lost position, the Americans were the assailants; and that they were uniformly defeated in their attempts. He estimates the force of the Americans at nearly double what their official reports state it to have been. Both parties nearly double the (presumed) loss of their enemy; and the American, though something nearer to the admission of the Englishman than the Englishman was to the admission of the American, estimated the force of his enemy considerably over the official account.

The writer was struck with these official discrepancies. The documents were uttered to the world under the same forms, in the same language, and by people acknowledging the same moral influences. He was induced to exclaim, Where is the truth of history? The writer knows nothing more of the merits of this question than is contained in the documents he has examined, and which any one may also examine, who has a curiosity equal to his own. The circumstance should, however, teach moderation to partisans, as it abundantly proves that the data on which they found their opinions cannot always be of the most unexceptionable nature.

The day of the final decision by Congress was one of great interest here. All the candidates were on the spot, in the discharge of their official duties, and large bodies of their friends had assembled to witness, and, if possible, to influence the result. Cadwallader obtained a convenient position, where we both witnessed the whole manner of the election.

Although three names were returned to Congress for the choice, it was universally understood that the selection would be made between Messrs. Adams and Jackson. It would have been indecent in the representatives to prefer Mr. Crawford over two men, both of whom had received nearly double the number of the popular votes that had been given in his favour, though by the constitution they certainly had a right to elect which of the three they pleased. It was thought that the representatives of those States in which the electors had given their votes for this gentleman, would make a single demonstration in his favour, and then give their voices for one or the other of the two candidates, who, it was well known, must eventually succeed.

The gallery of the hall of Congress was crowded nearly to suffocation. The Senators were present as a sort of legal witnesses of the election, and many men of high political consideration were in the lobbies and behind the desks. In short, every one was there who could gain admission by art or influence. The arrangements for this important proceeding were exceedingly unpretending, though remarkably imposing by their simplicity, and that air of grave composure which usually reigns over all the legislative proceedings of this country.

The members of the different States were now seated together, since they composed so many separate colleges which, on this momentous question, were to pronounce the voices of their particular communities. Here, sat the numerous and grave-looking repre-

sentation of the powerful State of New-York, and by their side was a solitary individual, who, in his own person, held all the authority that was to be exercised on that important day, by the younger community of Indiana. This gentleman, and one or two others, were men of peculiar importance in an event like this, since accident had placed them individually on a level with large bodies of enlightened and discreet men. Still it is not probable that they dared to depart from the known wishes of the people they represented, so direct and certain is the punishment which usually attends popular displeasure in this country.

At the appointed hour, the States began to collect the voices among themselves. The members voted by ballot, having established for that purpose, a set of simple forms by which the votes were collected and reported to tellers appointed to receive them by the house. Fraud was impossible, since each college knew the precise number of its votes, and each individual deposited his ballot with his own hand. The duty was soon performed by the smaller States, and a moment of breathless suspense succeeded while the representatives of New-York were collecting their votes. The friends of Mr. Adams had counted on twelve States with great confidence, but the number and the peculiar policy of the members from New-York had rendered their vote more doubtful. The result was, however, soon known on the floor of the house, as was quite apparent by the look of suppressed triumph that was playing about the eyes of certain partisans, and the air of forced composure that was assumed by their adversaries.

The result was communicated to the Speaker, (who had himself been a candidate before the electoral colleges,) and then it was officially announced "that *thirteen* States had given their votes for John Quincy Adams, for President of the United States

during the four years, commencing on the fourth of March next, and that the said John Quincy Adams was duly elected."*

While the sweet, clear, voice of Mr. Clay was announcing this important news, I never witnessed a more intense silence in any assembly. The stillness continued a moment after his words had ceased, and then followed the low hum of whispers, and immediately after, a half involuntary and feeble clapping of hands was heard in the galleries. This little burst of exultation on the part of some indiscreet spectators, gave me an opportunity of witnessing the manner in which the American legislators maintain order and assert their dignity. "Sergeant-at-arms, clear the galleries!" commanded the Speaker, in a voice, that of itself hushed the slightest sound of approbation. The officers of the house instantly performed their duty, and in a few moments those spacious and commodious seats which were so lately teeming with conscious human countenances, presented nothing to the eye but its magnificent colonnade and long rows of empty benches.

The house soon adjourned, and every body quitted the Capitol, some filled with joy they could ill suppress, and others evidently struggling to conceal the defeat of expectations which had probably been more fed by hope than reason. The important question was, however, irretrievably decided by a first vote, notwithstanding hundreds had anticipated that a struggle similar to that of 1801 was about to occur again.

The election had been conducted with great heat, especially in the public prints, and so much seeming violence of denunciation had been used during the discussion, that I confess I was induced to look about me, as we quitted the edifice, in quest of the legions that were to tame so many unquiet spirits, and to

* Thirteen States being a majority of the twenty-four which now compose the Union, were necessary to a choice.

teach them submission to an authority that exercised its functions in forms so simple as those I had just witnessed. I had heard so much of revolution, and of the disorders of popular governments, that it did not appear possible a question which, an hour before, had filled the minds and voices of men with so much bitterness, could peaceably subside in quiet, and in submission to a force that was invisible.

During the preceding week, more than one foreign functionary had whispered in my ear something that implied a sneer on the folly of periodically throwing society so near the verge of dissolution, by enlisting the passions of the community in a question that embraced so many important interests as these frequent elections; and one of them had intimated an expectation that, in the event of his failure, there would be a rising in favour of a military hero, who was not accustomed to defeat. I remembered the reply of my quiet yeoman in the stage-coach, and did not certainly carry my expectations quite so far; but still it was inconceivable that passions which had been so strongly excited, should subside without at least some of the usual indications of a disappointed resentment.

While descending Capitol hill, we met a warm partisan of the unsuccessful candidate, who was known to us both. "Well, ———," said Cadwallader, "what do you intend to do now? Your man has, beyond all hope, lost the day." "We shall change the face of things four years hence," was the answer. The reply was given in the tone of one who seemed conscious that he and his friends had been mistaken in their force, but who, at the same time, felt that legal means of obtaining a triumph were always before him. I must acknowledge, when I found that one of the most violent partisans I had ever met, was for deferring his schemes of revenge to a day so distant as four years, and that he even then contemplated to effect his object by means of the ballot-box,

I began to despair of seeing a revolution in America during my visit. It is true, that the defeated party have begun already to raise a clamour against corruptions and bargains; but it is very evident that they are doing it as mariners place an extra anchor to windward, to be in readiness for the tempest which is known to come on periodically.*

The result of this election, and the sudden calm that succeeded to so much apparent warmth, have again led me to reflect on the vague and imperfect impressions which we get in Europe, of the actual political condition of America. During the war of 1812, one saw monthly accounts, in the journals of England, that this, or that, State of the confederation was on the verge of a separation from the Union, and that distress had driven men to madness and all sorts of political desperation. If these accounts were published in good faith, they imply an inconceivable ignorance of the actual state of the country; for, unless the opinions of intelligent men of all parties grossly deceive me, there never has been one hour since the adoption of the present constitution, when probably one thousand *natives* of the whole United States have seriously contemplated any such event as likely to be near. If the paragraphs to which I allude, were

* The writer had an excellent opportunity of witnessing the effect of the American institutions, shortly after the event above described, while on a visit to the city of Philadelphia. A foreigner, who conducted a paper in that city, was so profoundly ignorant of the people among whom he lived, as to invite a meeting of the citizens of Pennsylvania, in order to provide the means of marching to Washington to put down Mr. Adams, who, it was affirmed, had been elected by means of corruption. Curiosity drew thousands of spectators to the appointed spot, in order to see what would be done at such a meeting. No officers appeared to oppose it, and yet the affair ended in the utter disdain of the whole community. The miserable intruder on the peaceful habits and common sense of the Americans was too much despised to be punished for his impudence, though he could not escape contempt and ridicule.

published with a view to deceive the people of Europe, it has induced the inevitable consequences of a wilful ignorance, viz. disappointment. I am perfectly satisfied, that a vast majority of the citizens of this country have more confidence in their own institutions than in those of any other nation; nor can I find, on a reasonably close examination of the subject, that they are so very wrong. One thing is certain, that other nations have made much nearer approaches to their opinions, during the last half century, than they have made to the opinions of other nations.*

I have conversed freely on this matter with my friend Cadwallader. I cannot say that he discusses the subject with particular gravity; but one of his remarks struck me as possessing singular force. "How is it," he said, "that you, or any stranger who enters our country, can and does freely discuss the danger of a dissolution of our confederacy, or the probability that we shall one day become a monarchy, and that, too, without giving offence or finding any difficulty in meeting with disputants? or how is it that an American never goes into an European country, Switzer-

* What are all the changes that have occurred in so many kingdoms on the continent of Europe, but approaches to the American system? It is certainly the fashion, and for obvious reasons, to look to England as a model for the new constitutions, but what is England herself about? The American would say, that the recent repeal or alteration of the Test Act, the state of the Catholic question, the disfranchisement of rotten boroughs, the improvement of the common law, and, in short, the whole plan of rational reform which now pervades England, rests on principles, that rather than abandon, his ancestors preferred to emigrate. When a man states this undeniable truth, with a view to exult in the superior penetration of his own people, he should be reminded how very far the most faultless are from perfection in any thing; but when an European insolently and ignorantly assumes that the United States are existing in a state of political insecurity, every day and every hour, the citizen of the latter country has a natural right to throw these stubborn facts into the teeth of such supercilious commentators.

land, perhaps, excepted, without finding men, let their breeding be what it may,. who very unequivocally let him know that they consider his government as a chimerical project, and the constitution of his empire exceedingly frail; while, on the other hand, if the American attempt a comparison between his own government and that of his assailant, he is generally silenced by cold looks and an averted eye? It is odd that all this sensitiveness, more especially as the parties exhibiting it rarely fail of being bold enough on the subject of American democracy, should abide in the midst of such conscious security. We all of us know, that most Europeans so far identify themselves with their soil as to believe they have a moral superiority over the American that is exactly in proportion to the antiquity of their governments; but *we* also know a fact that commonly escapes their acuteness. The practices of Europe form part of our experience; while Europe knows nothing of our practices. Answer me one thing. Why does America trouble herself so little about the governments of Europe, while all Europe is demonstrating on paper that our republics cannot endure? I think, when you find the motive of this marked difference, you will not be far from the secret consciousness which the two parties have in the strength and durability of their respective systems."

The evening of the day of the election was one of those on which Mrs. Monroe opens the doors of the White House to the motley assemblage I have already described. Great curiosity was felt by every one to be present, because it was known that the principal personages, who had been so recently exerting themselves in the question which was just decided, were in the habit of paying their respects, on these occasions, to the wife of the first magistrate. We went at ten.

Perhaps the company on this evening was a little

more numerous than on the preceding drawing-room. It was composed of the same sort of visiters, and it was characterized by the same decency of exterior and of deportment. We found the President and Mrs. Monroe in their usual places; the former encircled by a knot of politicians, and the latter attended by a circle of women, of rather brilliant appearance. Most of the Secretaries were near, conversing cheerfully, like men who had just got rid of an irksome and onerous toil; and I thought, by the placid air of the venerable chief justice, that he was well content that the harassing question was decided. The assistant justices of the supreme court were also present, near the person of the President; and a group had collected in the same room; in the midst of which I discovered the smiling features and playful eye of La Fayette. The Speaker was known to have favoured the election of Mr. Adams, and I thought I could trace secret satisfaction at the result in a countenance that his height elevated above those of most of his companions. There was no coarse exultation on the part of the victors, nor any unmanly dejection on that of the defeated. Several of the latter spoke to us; and, in reply to the laughing condolences of my friend, they made but one remark—"We shall see what the next four years will do."

"How do you do, General Jackson?" said Cadwallader, as we passed out of one drawing-room into another. The unsuccessful candidate returned the greeting with his usually mild and graceful mien. I watched his manly and marked features narrowly, during the courteous dialogue that followed; but, with all my suspicions, it was impossible to trace the slightest symptoms of a lurking disappointment. He left us laughing and conversing cheerfully with some ladies, who induced him to join their party. A minute before, he had been seen congratulating his success-

ful rival with great dignity, and with perfect good nature.

We now entered the last apartment of the suite, with the hope of finding a cooler atmosphere. A group of men, among whom perhaps a dozen women were intermingled, had collected about some object of common interest. Drawing near, I caught a glimpse of the cold air which, in contrast to an uncommonly fine and piercing eye, forms so remarkable an expression in the countenance of Mr. Adams. He was certainly in good spirits; though, had we not known his recent victory, it is probable that his manner would not have been at all remarked. He soon extricated himself from the crowd, and spoke to two or three of us who stood together. "Why have you not been to see us lately?" he inquired of a member of Congress, from Virginia: "Mrs. Adams complains that you were not at her last evening." "I have been there so often this winter, that I began to think it necessary to be absent for the sake of form." "Is that the etiquette?" "We must ask this question of you;" returned the Virginian, laughing, in allusion to the Secretary's well-known strictures on the subject; "*you* are our authority in all matters of etiquette." "Well then," returned the President elect, with great good humour, and with the tact of a courtier; "I pronounce it to be always etiquette for Mr. —— to visit Mrs. Adams."*

* Mr. Adams and General Jackson are again candidates for the presidency. As the contest is as yet confined to these two, and it is so shortly to be decided (in December of 1828,) it is probable that one of them will be chosen. What the writer now states, he says understandingly. A good deal is certainly said concerning the inexperience of General Jackson, and some press the circumstance of his chief merit being military, as a reason against him. There is not a man in the Union who, however, seriously apprehends any danger from his election It is false that he is not supported by wary and prudent men The writer can name a hundred gentlemen in the middle States, of education, of fortune, and of religion, too, who are his warm

TO SIR EDWARD WALLER, BART.

&c. &c.

Washington, ———

YESTERDAY, while walking with Cadwallader on the banks of the Potomac, we saw a group of gentlemen, in the midst of whom we distinguished the animated features of La Fayette, moving towards a steam-boat that was waiting their arrival. A moment of explanation induced us to join the party, which was about to visit the tomb of Washington.

Mount Vernon, an estate which the hero inherited from an elder brother, lies on the river at the distance of about two hours' sailing towards the sea. The boat was rather more crowded than was desirable for such a visit; but the circumstances left us no choice. We passed the little city of Alexandria on our route, and reached the point of destination within a reasonable time of our departure.

The estate of Mount Vernon was left by the will of its late possessor to his nephew, Mr. Bushrod Washington, who has long been one of the assistant justices of the supreme court of the United States. The country, immediately about the dwelling, is much wooded; the land being neither particularly level, nor yet very uneven. The house stands on a rather

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friends. The question is altogether one of men, there being scarcely a measure of policy that is likely to be much affected by the result. A great deal of the popularity of General Jackson is owing to an injudicious and presuming opposition, which has foolishly ascribed a danger to his success, that is as false, as his friends are determined to manifest it is ridiculous. But men may well hesitate about rejecting so tried a patriot, and so experienced a statesman, as Mr. Adams.

sudden rise, which may be elevated more than a hundred feet above the level of the water. The ascent from the river is quite precipitous, though the ground falls away to the north and to the south, with rather more regularity. The building is placed on the highest point; a position which scarcely leaves room for a very narrow lawn between it and the brow of the declivity in front. In the rear, the formation of the ground is level, for some distance, and tolerably extensive gardens communicate with the inner or back court.

The house of Mount Vernon is constructed of a frame-work, whose interstices, I am informed, are filled with bricks. The exterior covering is of planks, concealed in such a manner as to give it, at a little distance, the appearance of being made of hewn stone. The interior finish is like that of any other better sort of mansion. The length of the whole edifice cannot greatly exceed one hundred feet; and I should think that, in depth, it is something less than fifty. There are, however, two semicircular chains of offices, which project from each of its ends towards the rear, something in the form of sweeping galleries. These additions serve to give the building much more of an air of size from the side of the gardens than from that of the river. Towards the east (the river front) there is a colonnade which supports a roof that is continued from the main edifice. Though the pillars are very simple, the effect of a colonnade, so lofty and so long, is rather striking; and, on the whole, it leaves an impression that the house was one not altogether unworthy of its simple but illustrious possessor.

The interior of the building is exceedingly irregular, though far from inconvenient. I had full leisure for its examination, while a solemn scene was taking place at the tomb. La Fayette had been permitted to go to this sacred spot, unattended by any except the immediate members of the two families. I was per-

mitted, by an especial favour, to pass up the ascent by another path, and to examine the rest of the grounds and the mansion.

There was but one considerable apartment in the dwelling. This was a drawing-room that occupied the whole width of the house, with a proper proportion of its length. The rest of the rooms were small, and of arrangements to prove that they were constructed before the master of the mansion was in the habit of receiving more guests than fell to the share of a private gentleman. Most of the furniture was of the time of the hero. It was exceedingly simple, though I thought it quite good enough, in fashion and in form, for a country residence. The principal drawing-room had more the air of a reception-room than the others, which were altogether in a quiet, comfortable, and domestic taste. There was a library, that is rather large for America, but which, in Europe, would be thought very small for the habitation of a man of any eminence.

I looked on all these things with a deep and increasing emotion. The house, at the moment, with the exception of Cadwallader and myself, and a domestic who showed us through the rooms, was entirely empty. More than once, as my hand touched a lock to open some door, I felt the blood stealing up my arm, as the sudden conviction flashed on my mind that the member rested on a place where the hand of Washington had probably been laid a thousand times. That indescribable, but natural and deeply grateful, feeling beset me, which we all are made to know when the image of a fellow-mortal, who has left a mighty name on earth, is conjured before us by the imagination in the nearest approaches to reality that death, and time, and place, and the whisperings of an excited fancy, will allow. There was a sort of secret desire, rather than an expectation, of finding something more than what reason told me to expect; and

I passed from parlour to parlour, in my haste, until my companions were left behind, and I found myself alone in a sort of upper office of the mansion. I shall never forget the sensation that I felt, as my eye gazed on the first object it encountered. It was an article of no more dignity than a leathern fire-bucket; but the words "Geo. Washington" were legibly written on it in white paint. I know not how it was, but the organ never altered its look until the name stood before my vision distinct, insulated, and almost endowed with the attributes of the human form. The deception was aided by all the accessories which the house could furnish. Just at that instant, my friend, who is a man of tall stature and grave air, appeared in the adjoining door, without speaking. I felt the blood creeping near my heart with awe, nor did the illusion vanish until Cadwallader passed before me, and laid a hand, with a melancholy smile, on the words, and then retired towards the grounds, with a face that I thought he would gladly conceal.

We were shown into the gardens and greenhouses. In the latter, the domestic culled us a bouquet of hot-house flowers; and, turning to a box which lay at hand, he took a sheet of paper, and, enveloping their stems, presented them to my friend. Cadwallader received them thoughtfully; but his mind was too much occupied at the moment to attend to so trifling an occurrence. We had returned to the city, and were at our late dinner, when his eye seemed riveted, by some charm, on the paper that encircled this little offering. Scattering the flowers on every side of him, he laid the paper on the table, and read its contents with breathless eagerness. It proved to be a sheet torn from a farming journal of the modern Cincinnatus, which had been kept in his own hand. The writing was distinct, though there were many technical abbreviations: the pages were without blot or erasure, and the precision of the language

and the minuteness of the details were rigidly exact. The precious morsel was divided, and each of us took his portion, like men who were well content with the possession of some sacred relic.

When we left the green-house, we were joined by the party of the veteran Frenchman. We had parted at the margin of the water, and each of us had found subjects for reflection that were alike pleasing and painful. Just before we separated, there had been a little hesitation in the choice of the path that led to the mansion. "Let me show you the way," cried M. George La Fayette, eagerly, but with evident emotion: "I know all the paths of Mount Vernon." Twenty-five years before, during the exile of his natural parent, he had been intrusted to Washington, as to a second father, and he now rushed forward, full of his recollections, to point out a route that time and momentous scenes in another hemisphere, had not blotted from his memory. I shall not attempt to describe what passed at the vault during the visit of La Fayette. He was powerfully affected, and the recess of the dead was opened to his admission. When he joined us, it was evident that his feelings had been wrought up to a high and painful point; and I thought his eye wandered over the familiar objects of the dwelling, as if every thing keenly reminded him that he who gave them life and interest, had passed away from the moving scenes of the earth into the solemn quiet of the place he had just quitted. We took the occasion of his absence from the spot, to go ourselves to the tomb. As Cadwallader knew the way, I had no other companion.

The family vault of Mount Vernon stands near the brow of the declivity, at a little distance from the mansion, and at the point where the ground begins to fall away to the south. It is as plain and simple as can be well imagined. The excavation in the earth is neither large nor deep, and the small portion

of the work that is visible in front, is a dead wall of bricks. The door was low, humble and unornamented—a more meek and fitting passage to the narrow house of the dead than thresholds and arches of mocking architecture. The earth is rounded over the summit of the vault, and a few stunted and sickly cedars have taken root on and about it.

I have stood by the side of many a boasted and admired tomb; but by none with the awe and reverence with which I gazed on this. The dark days of the revolution, the gloom and difficulties which threatened the first hours of the present government, the cheerful and prosperous scenes through which I had so recently passed, crowded on my memory, and produced a teeming picture in which the most prominent object was the form of the man whose ashes were mouldering beneath my feet.

I have ever been an ardent, and were there not so much reason to support me, I might say an enthusiastic admirer of Washington. His character, unlike that of the heroes of other days, is most illustrious when seen at the nearest approach. Those who lived the closest to his person, and who possessed the best opportunity of studying his moral qualities, are touched with the deepest reverence for his virtues. The narrative of his private deeds is the counterpart of the history of his public acts. They were alike founded on the immutable principles of justice and truth. Men already regard him with the admiration with which they gaze at a severe statue of antiquity. He stands, naked of meretricious ornament, but grand in the majesty of reason.

Some, who know little of the history of the man, or of his nation, confound the images of his renown, by blending his merit with deeds that it was the fortune of no one to perform in America. This was not the country of Alexanders and Napoleons.

The useful career of Washington commenced at

an age when men are occupied in fitting themselves for the active scenes of life. Before he had attained his majority, he was employed by his native province in situations of high trust. Even at that early period of life, he had established a character for firmness, integrity, prudence, disinterestedness, and humanity, which attended him to the peaceful grave in which I found his venerated ashes. There was an unpretending, but imposing dignity thrown about the person and character of this extraordinary youth, that distinguished him in every future scene. As a soldier, his career had been circumscribed, as a politician, he had enjoyed no opportunities to earn distinction, and yet, when the hour of trial came, the eyes of a nation sought him anxiously. The Congress of the Union, composed of men from differently constituted and distant provinces, summoned him by a common impulse to lead its armies. The influence of his character had been silently extending itself over the vast regions whose fortunes were trusted to his care. His rise to power was degraded by no intrigue; its exercise was stained by no abuse. The times required that a people, jealous beyond precedent of their rights, should trust a large portion of their destinies to the keeping of a single man. They calmly, dispassionately, and wisely made their election; confidence was nobly bestowed, meekly received, and gloriously requited!

The sword of Washington did not leap from its scabbard with the eagerness of military pride, or with the unbridled haste of one willing to make human life the sacrifice of an unhallowed ambition. It was deliberately drawn at the call of his country, but with a reluctance that came deep from the heart, and with a diffidence that acknowledged the undisputed dominion of his God. He went forth to battle with the meekness of a mortal, the humanity of a Christian, the devotedness of a patriot, and the resolution

of a victor. As his object was limited by a righteous moderation, so were his intentions to achieve it, bounded only by success. In the air, the declarations, and the pledges of such a man, we are not to look for dramatic effect, or promises that were made to be forgotten. He took the trust his country offered, because it was the pleasure of that country he should do so; and when its duties were excellently performed, he returned it to the hands from whence it had come, with a simplicity which spoke louder than a thousand protestations. The integrity of such a mind needed no stimulants from the pages of history. Its impulses were drawn from a higher source. Its self-denial was not a victory over opportunity, and occasion, and power, and all the natural promptings of busy man; but it was a silent, enduring, principled, and unconquerable will to refuse to admit temptation. So far as the human heart can be judged by outward symptoms, there never was a moment when this true hero ever suffered his thoughts to change their righteous and devoted direction; there never was a moment when men, in the least competent to speak on the subject, ever suspected him of any other object than patriotism. It is impossible to look closely into the conduct and motives of this man, and not to feel that his simple rule of morals said, self before dishonour, my country before self, and God before all.

It is the common fate of heroes to suffer by intimacy; but the private life of Washington was as beautiful, as his public was glorious. The latter was no more than an expansion of those principles which controlled the former. The same sternness of integrity, the same simplicity of purpose, could always be traced in that familiar conduct in which most men fail. It is a fact worthy of remark, that his most confidential correspondence is still in existence, inviting scrutiny, and challenging comment. There was a time when reverses, and calumny, and weari-

ness of suffering, had made a party of his countrymen impatient of his government. A few misguided individuals would have elevated a chief of untried abilities to the post he filled. The machinations of his enemies were known to Washington. Accident, rather than merit, had placed his rival in a situation to reap a glory far exceeding that which had then fallen to the share of any leader in the contest. But the issue of events still rested on contingencies. Washington saw the crisis from a distance, and though unfortunate, and opposed to a victorious and powerful foe, he stripped himself of force, in order to insure a good to his country, that would probably hasten his own downfall. But the nation saw the sacrifice and too well knew the estimate of merit to be deceived. Still it required that a high reward should be bestowed on the successful general. He received another trust, and sank under an incompetency that no longer was supported by the extraordinary talent of subordinates. Then it was that the soul of Washington was exhibited in its native power. The bruised spirit of foiled ambition was solaced, and so solaced, that the disappointed rejoiced in the sympathy of success.

The character of Washington was Doric, in all its proportions. Its beauty is the beauty of harmony between purpose and means, and its grandeur is owing to its chaste simplicity. Like the order of architecture to which I have ventured to ascribe a resemblance, it is not liable to the details of criticism. You see it in its majesty of outline, in its durability, and in its admirable adaptation to usefulness; but it rests on a foundation too firm, and it upholds a superstructure too severe, to be familiarly dissected. His fame already resembles that which centuries have produced for other men, while it owes no portion of its purity to the mist of time. Truth, bold, clear, and radiant, is the basis of his renown; and truth will

bear his name to posterity in precisely the same simple and just attributes as it was known to those who lived in his immediate presence.

The age has been prolific of character, and it should be prolific in the lessons it conveys. I think a mighty moral is taught by the careers of Washington and Napoleon. A parallel between these eminent men is impossible; but a comparison is easy indeed. To say that the former lived for others, and the latter solely for himself, is to say no more than what most men see, and feel, and acknowledge. To endeavour to magnify the exploits of the latter, by putting them in contrast with those of the former, would be unjust, since accident and not merit was at the bottom of this distinction. It should, however, never be forgotten, that the first achieved all he aimed at, which was all that man should do; and that the last failed, from an incompetency of estimating his own powers. The error of the latter is the more unpardonable, since, to gross want of judgment, must be added unworthiness of purpose; nor is it in any degree lessened by the circumstance that he sinned in the presence of so bright and so glorious an example. If there be any so weak as to believe the asseverations of Napoleon, that he fought for aught but self, let them try his patriotism by the same test as that of Washington. It is true that, in mere extent of achievement, the hero of France vastly outstripped the patriot of America; but the latter not only wanted a theatre for his actions, but he was often deficient in means. Merit is of a nature too comparative to be rashly reduced to results; but strip these men of their accidental and adventitious advantages, and regard them steadily. The military career of Napoleon was run in the current of prosperity, while that of Washington was a constant, but manly struggle, against a combination of the most adverse circumstances. In addition to this important fact,

the one considered his troops as the devoted instruments of his own purposes, and he used them accordingly, while the other looked on his followers not only as the sole guardians of a country to which they were devoted, but as an important portion of that community for whose happiness he was contending. Napoleon was greatest in prosperity; but the fame of Washington is as equal as his character.

They who believe that America would not have been free without Washington, neither understand the part he acted, nor the people who intrusted him with power. The war of 1776 was purely a war of principle. Remonstrance and petition had been exhausted, and no duty of forbearance was neglected. All that justice, and temper, and mercy required, had been done before the sword was drawn at all. When it was determined to resist, it became necessary to choose a leader worthy of a cause so righteous; one who would give dignity to the quarrel in the eyes of nations; who would secure confidence at home, and who could command respect from those who were bent on submission to their will. These difficult duties did Washington perform, in a manner to exceed the hopes of the most sanguine. His enemies never dared to assail his integrity. No man was ever sufficiently hardy to affect to distrust his motives. While he wielded a power little short of that of a dictator, and wielded it firmly and with steadiness, the governed never knew uneasiness. So far from aiming at an unjust purpose, he checked, not with Roman severity, but with the directness and simplicity of an honest man, the least approach to that disorder or disaffection in his troops, which, if any thing could do it in a country like this, would have effected the views of a personal ambition. On all occasions, he steadily regarded duty, and disregarded self. Nor were opportunities wanting, of which a man less pure might be tempted to profit. The dis-

content of his unrequited army at the close of the contest, might have deluded a less devoted patriot; and ambition itself could not desire a better pretext for urging a stronger government on the nation, than the resistance to the law, which occurred in the powerful State of Pennsylvania so soon after his election to the presidency. Perhaps history does not record an instance of an insurrection which threatened to be more dangerous to infant institutions than this; and it is certain that history does not record an instance in which resistance to the laws was more promptly, and at a less expense of blood, subdued. But the glory of Washington is to be sought in the whole tenor of his life; in the bright example, and in the stern lesson of virtue that he has exhibited to the age, and which he has bequeathed to posterity. He is the only public man, since the general use of letters has rendered communication easy and judgments critical, that has, by common consent, purchased an imperishable, and, what is far more glorious, an unsullied name.

It is cheering to virtue to know how lasting and more certain are its rewards, than the temporary and doubtful fame which attends the mere conqueror. In what but the accidental attributes of a more advanced state of civilization, does Napoleon materially differ from Jenghis Khan? His contemporaries are already treating him with severity; and, before another age is passed, and passion and personal antipathies shall have ceased, his career will lose one-half of its lustre by the active agency of truth. How different has been the lot of Washington! He has not yet been in his tomb for half the life of man, and the world have already placed him at the side of the brightest names of antiquity. The young, and the restless, and the weak of mind, may still find matter of applause in the career of Napoleon; but it is the thoughtful, the good, and the experienced, who see

the most to admire in the deeds, and the most to reverence in the character of Washington.

Until I stood by the side of the grave of this illustrious man, I had never ceased to reproach his country with neglect, in not having reared a monument of marble to his memory. But as I lingered, for near an hour, about the humble vault which holds his remains, it was impossible not to feel how much stronger is the impression left by character, in a place where no accessories of art exist to distract its musings. If I were an American, it would be the wish nearest to my heart to see the estate of Mount Vernon pass into the keeping of the nation, in order that it might be preserved, as nearly as possible, in its present condition. The vault should be kept in the touching and peaceful quiet in which it is now seen; and when foreigners ask for the monument of their hero, let them be referred, with honest pride, to that liberty, and to those institutions which grew on the confidence of the world, under his wise and patriotic guidance. If there be a name in the records of history that can afford to stand before the eyes of criticism devoid of artificial aid, it is that of the man who now sleeps beneath a few stunted cedars, and within mouldering walls of brick, on the banks of the Potomac

TO THE PROFESSOR JANSEN,

&c. &c.

Philadelphia, ———

Congress necessarily rose on the night of the 4th of March. You must have learned from my previous letters, that a Congress lasts but two years, commencing on the 4th of March of one year, and terminating on the 3d of March of the year but one following. Of course it would be necessary to convene the new members, in order to proceed in legislation after the prescribed period. This can be, and has been, done, in times of need, but the usual practice is to let the bodies separate, at the end of what is called the "short session." The terms of short and long session are easily explained. The constitution requires that Congress should assemble on the first Monday in December of each year, unless it has adjourned to a different period, or is expressly convened by a call from the President. On the first year of the service of the members, it is plain they may sit as long as they please; but on the second, their term of service expires on the 3d of March. As one-third of the Senators, and perhaps about the same number of the Representatives, usually retire every two years, it would be necessary to summon those who supply their places, should the public service require an immediate continuation of the legislative duties. The Senate sometimes sits a day or two after the lower house has adjourned, in order to attend to what is called executive business (the approval of nominations to office.) The practice is, I believe, uniform, at the end of a presidential term, in order to give the new incumbent an opportunity to name his cabinet In

all such cases, the new Senators are summoned in time to attend. Of course, no legislative business can then be done.

Late on the evening of the 3d of March, Congress rose; but, in point of fact, the change of executive power was not made until the President elect took the oath of office. This ceremony took place about noon of the following day. In 1801, when Mr. Adams, the elder, went out of office, he made sundry nominations which were confirmed by the old Senators on the evening of the 3d of March. Mr. Jefferson, his successor, refused to ratify these appointments. He took the ground that, as President, he had the power to appoint to office, the Senate only possessing, in effect, a veto. Now, the new functionaries had not received their commissions, and no one could, constitutionally, sign them but the actual President; this, the actual President refused to do, and of course there were no appointments, since it is by no means incumbent on the President to appoint an officer, even after the Senate has approved of his name, the power of the latter going no farther than their negative. It could be of no moment, except in the appointment of a judge, whether the President appointed these officers or not, since, in all other cases, he possesses the power of removal, the commissions invariably running—"this commission to continue in force during the pleasure of the President of the United States for the time being."

The President absolutely appoints certain inferior officers of the government, such as midshipmen, masters, gunners, &c. &c., in the navy, and all the cadets that enter the army; but, in point of fact, a great deal of republican equality is observed in the distribution of even these small favours. The plan is to give to each State officers in proportion to its representatives; still the absolute selection is with the President. All the postmasters in the country, who are,

in truth, only deputies of the postmaster-general, receive their commissions from the latter officer. Of course the President, who can at any time remove the postmaster-general, has a controlling voice in all the superior appointments of that department. The Secretaries also appoint their own clerks, and there is a considerable patronage in the hands of the Secretary of the Treasury, who names several hundred officers, in the different custom-houses, that receive salaries of between five hundred and a thousand dollars each. The constitution indicates certain officers who *shall* be nominated to the Senate. It then goes on to say, that all others must be similarly appointed, unless Congress, by law, shall see fit to trust the power in the President, or in the heads of departments. As yet, Congress has seen fit to do both; but should the trusts be abused, it always possesses the power to repeal its own enactments.

A great deal is said in Europe concerning the economy of this government. It is the subject of much ridicule, and of high praise, on our side of the Atlantic. In order to form a just opinion on the subject, it is necessary to ascertain some of the leading facts.

You will always remember, that as there exists a double form of government, there are double sets of officers to be paid. This circumstance, however, does not add in any great degree to the expense, since no duty is performed twice. The President of the United States receives a salary of twenty-five thousand dollars a year. This sum can neither be increased nor diminished during his term of service. He is also supplied with a furnished house. On this salary the President can live like a gentleman who receives a good deal of company, and it is thought he may even lay by a reasonable excess yearly. Perhaps, considering the nature of the government, the income is about what it should be. The heads of departments receive six thousand dollars each, and

no house. Their salaries are too low, since they scarcely afford the means of creditable subsistence to men in their public situations. It is probable, however, that the country will, ere long, erect buildings for the residence of these officers, and increase their pay a little. There is no plausible reason why it should be so much inferior to that of the President. The chief justice of the United States receives five thousand dollars a year, and each of the assistant justices four thousand five hundred. The judges of the district courts are paid from eight hundred to three thousand dollars a year, according to the amount of their services. The Vice-President gets five thousand dollars a year. The members of Congress receive eight dollars a day, each, while at Washington, and eight dollars for every twenty miles of their route in going and returning. Ministers plenipotentiary receive nine thousand dollars a year salary, the same sum for an outfit, and one-fourth of it to defray the expenses of their return home. This pay is much too small, certainly; and it is as unwise in its generality, as in its amount. It is unjust to pay a man who is compelled to live in London, for instance, the same sum as a man who is compelled to live in Madrid. It is unwise to neglect to use, in a rational degree, an influence that other people acknowledge, whatever may be its inherent merit, or whatever may be the opinion of the people of the United States themselves on the subject. Their motive in sending ministers abroad, is interest: and we, who know the effect of a little appearance in our hemisphere, know that he is a gainer who consults the prejudices of those with whom he is required to dwell. But independently of this truth, which must, however, be taken with a proper degree of qualification, in many places, the agents of this government cannot subsist with a proper degree of comfort on their salaries. No man can maintain the establish-

ment of a private gentleman and educate four or five children well, on two thousand pounds a year, in London. Consuls receive no pay (as such.) The collectors of the customs are paid in proportion to their duties, limiting the receipts to less than five thousand dollars a year. A similar plan is observed with postmasters, and sundry other officers; the maximum of pay varying according to the importance of the office. Although the higher functionaries of this government are not often paid as well as they should be, the lower officers are very generally well rewarded. Salaries of two or three thousand dollars, for situations of no great dignity, are not uncommon, and there are many subordinates who receive from eight to twelve hundred. In short, the object, though it sometimes fails, is to make all classes of men comfortable, without furnishing the means of a useless splendour to any. The errors that have undoubtedly been made, are the unavoidable results of a popular government in which official men are sometimes reluctant to incur a responsibility that leads to no very important results. I think that time will correct them; and, should it not, the evil is one of far less magnitude than that which is entailed by a lavish expenditure of the public money.

The whole of the civil, diplomatic, and miscellaneous expenses of this government, for the year 1826, were 2,600,177 dollars. This is, however, exclusive of the cost of the State governments, and the cost of collecting the revenue. The latter is about 750,000 dollars. The military expenditure was 6,243,236 dollars. But the greater part of this sum was for the erection of fortifications, for ordnance, arming the militia, Indian department, and pensions of soldiers of the revolution, &c. The actual cost of the army, pay, subsistence and clothing included, was about 2,000,000 of dollars. That so extensive a country can protect itself at so cheap a rate, is in some

measure owing to its remote situation, but chiefly to its institutions, which trust its defence to the citizens. A vast deal is clearly gained, by thus limiting resistance to its foreign enemies. I do not think that the pressure of a crowded population can produce any material difference, since the present system of America must ever make it the interest of a great majority to preserve order. A soldier in the army receives five dollars a month pay, with his clothes and victuals. The officers are paid according to rank.* The other expenses of the army are of a temporary nature, and furnish no clue to future estimates.

The navy of the United States, for the same year (1826) cost 4,218,902 dollars. But this sum is also liable to a great deal of explanation. The United States, to be in readiness to meet any emergency, maintain a corps of about 950 officers. Their present policy is to foster this corps, and consequently no one member of it is put on half-pay, except at his own desire. The pay and subsistence of the officers, and the pay of the men, actually afloat (rather more than 5,000 in all,) somewhat exceeds a million of dollars. In this number, too, about one-tenth are quarter-deck officers. Much of the money is for the expenses of navy-yards, and the ordinary. About 300,000 dollars are for the provisions of the men. The rest is for the increase of the navy, arrearages, and for the support of the marine corps, of whom

* A soldier enlists for five years. He receives the following articles of clothing during that period, viz. five uniform coats; three cotton jackets with sleeves; three woollen ditto ditto; ten pairs of gray woollen overalls; ten pairs of drilling ditto; three fatigue frocks; five trowsers; ten pairs of laced boots; ten ditto shoes; ten flannel shirts: ten cotton ditto; ten pairs of stockings; ten ditto socks; two leathern stocks; one great coat; three blankets; five pairs of wings; four pompons; two cockades and eagles; four bands and tassels; one leathern cap-cover, plate, scales and ball; one forage-cap, and ten pairs of flannel drawers.

nearly 1,000 are employed. The latter are, of course, in addition to the sea officers and seamen. It would be troublesome to separate the several parts of these expenditures in such a manner as to give a clear and simple statement of each and all of them; but as the American government publishes the most minute documents on these subjects, it is in the power of any one to do it who has sufficient interest in the subject to pursue so elaborate an inquiry. I shall content myself with the main results, coupled with such facts of a general nature, as I think may reward you for the pain of deciphering my letters.*

* In the January number (LXXIII.) of the Quarterly Review, there is an article on the United States of America. The reviewer speaks boldly of the American navy, for he professes to treat of a work written by an English naval officer, who, in his turn, had also written a little decidedly on the same subject. In a note attached to the end of this volume, the writer has endeavoured to show in what points his information differs from that of both reviewer and reviewed, in respect to this important branch of the American policy. His present object is, however, confined to expenditure. In page 279 of the said Review, is the following sentence: "With this small number of men" (4,268,) "the establishments of the dock-yards on a very limited scale, and the civil branches of the service, a mere trifle, the sum expended for the naval department in 1826, was 4,222,952 dollars, or close upon one million sterling. In the printed report of the secretary of the treasury, now before the writer, Letter F. page 39, is a minute statement of the expenditure of the naval establishment for the year 1826. The gross amount is 4,218,902 dollars, 45 cents. From this Report the following items are extracted: "Repairs of vessels, 435,970; ship-nouses, 44,296; gradual increase of the navy, 793,704; ten sloops of war, 506,163; prohibition of slave trade, 22,220; pay and subsistence of marine corps (which is not included in the before mentioned number of men,) 219,686:" and no less a sum than 294,380 for improvements and additions to navy-yards, besides a number of small miscellaneous items, that make together about 110,000 more. The figures are all meant to represent dollars, and together they make 2,576,419, or something more than one-half the sum that the reviewer has taken for premises by which he wishes to show that the Americans maintain a small force at an enormous expense. Not one of the items here enumerated, properly belongs to the expense of the small number of men, the civil branches of the service, or the establishments of the dock-yards, unless additions and improvements

All the appointments of a captain of the navy, in command of a shore station, are worth something less than four thousand dollars a year, exclusive of a house. When in command of a vessel, his pay is considerably less. There is a difference made in the case of a vessel of a very small size, though the commander of a 44 receives as much as the commander of a 74. But the pay of both the army and navy should not be considered as permanently established, especially of the latter service, which is just beginning to receive, in all its branches, that grave attention that its vital importance to the security and dignity of the nation demands.

You will perceive that, as a rule, the inferior agents of the American government are better paid than the same description of individuals in the employment of almost any other nation, while the higher officers receive less.*

The positive annual expenses of the American government are not far from 13,000,000 dollars. Of this sum, rather more than three millions and a half are for the interest of the national debt. But the odd half million is met by the dividends of bank stock, for the purchase of which several millions of the

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to the latter can be thus considered. Independently of all this, the balance not only supports the service afloat, &c. &c. but it keeps *all* the officers of the navy (with perhaps a dozen voluntary exceptions) on *full pay*. The writer here leaves the matter between the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States, and the contributor to the Quarterly Review.—See Note A. end of the volume.

* The expenditure for the year 1828, is estimated as follows: the result rarely differing materially from these calculations. Civil, diplomatic, and miscellaneous, 1,828,385 dollars; military service, including fortifications, ordnance, Indian department, provisions, arming of militia, &c. 4,332,091 dollars; naval service, including the gradual increase of the navy, 3,788,349 dollars, making a total for the regular expenses of the government, including sums previously voted for erecting forts and building ships, of 9,947,125 dollars. The interest of the debt is not contained in this amount.

debt were created. The actual outgoings, therefore, for the current service of the country, all improvements and constructions included, are within 10,000,000 dollars. Every thing is so much on the advance in the United States, that it is difficult to arrive at an exact understanding of what is meant by current expenditure. Thus, of 2,600,177 dollars, which formed the amount of the civil, miscellaneous and diplomatic head of the account (for the year 1826,) near 1,200,000 dollars were miscellaneous enough, as the charges included 183,000 dollars for light-houses, near 300,000 for canal stock, and more than 200,000 for old claims arising out of the war of 1812. The real civil list of that year, exclusive of diplomacy, was 1,256,745 dollars, and the cost of all the diplomacy of the country was 180,103 dollars. This trifling sum supported the whole expense and contingencies, in short, the entire cost of more than twenty different missions in Europe, Africa, and America. It is worthy of remark, that the diplomacy of this country is managed about as well as that of most nations; and I am of opinion, that, when its power shall become sufficiently great to be dreaded, it will be found to be still more successful.

The clear revenue of the United States, from the customs alone, is now (1828) about 20,000,000 of dollars. As this source of receipts produces in itself a great excess over all the outgoings, there are no direct impositions laid by the general government. The debt is in the course of rapid extinguishment, and as the interest is annually diminished, the ability of the country to increase its expenditure is of course increased. Notwithstanding this prosperous state of the public purse, the most rigid economy is observed; a circumstance that it is idle to say is produced by any other cause than the direct agency of the people on the administration.

Thus far we have not touched on the salaries of

the State governments at all. They are graduated, however, on the same scale of expense, the richest and largest of these communities rarely paying as much to the public servants as the general government. There is undoubtedly, in some few instances, as in the legislatures and judiciaries, a double set of officers to support; but, when one remembers the great extent of the country, it will be seen that, under any other form of government, it would be impossible to avoid this expense. No single set of judges could travel over this great surface in times sufficiently short to administer justice equally and promptly, nor could one great and central legislative body enact all the local laws that are absolutely necessary to a country so new and so vast.

The only reply that the enemies of America (and they are all the enemies of liberty) can urge, when her example is pointed to in support of the doctrine of economy, is founded on the fact of the double form of its government, and the additional expense that is consequently incurred. I know of but two ways in which we can arrive sufficiently near the truth to ascertain whether this additional cost raises the expenses of the American to the level of those of the European or not. The one (and is it not infallible?) is to compare the amount of contributions paid by the parties; and the other is to attempt to reach the cost of governing some particular portion of the confederacy, and then to make the necessary comparisons between it and some equal community in our hemisphere. We will endeavour to do both.

The State of New-York contains one-seventh of the entire population of the Union. One-seventh of 2,600,177 dollars, the whole amount of the "civil, diplomatic, and *miscellaneous* expenses" of the general government for the year (1826) is 371,453. This dividend includes more than one million of miscellaneous expenditure, such as "light-houses," "stock in

canal companies," and "payment of claims for buildings destroyed in the war;" but no matter, we will take the amount in gross. Now the whole expenditure of the civil list of the State of New-York, is about 350,000 dollars. The two sums make 721,453 dollars. Here you have 1,700,000 inhabitants receiving justice at their own doors, internal protection, legislation in the utmost convenient form possible, and *all* the more general advantages of government, for the sum of less than half a dollar a head annually. If you divide the military and naval expenses of the United States by seven, you have the entire pecuniary charge that they defray, not only for the current expenses, but for the material provisions they are making for future defence.* The States are at no other material expenses than those attached to the civil list, unless it be for the purpose of domestic *improvements*, and even a great portion of the latter is thus defrayed, in the salaries of the *employés*.

Of incidental expenses the American pays less, considering his means, than the inhabitant of any other nation. Their city corporations, with the exception of one or two, are cheap, and little or no money is expended in mere show. There are no church establishments, and the religious contributions are therefore voluntary. Still the clergy are supported. There are various manners of doing this, as you may suppose, in a country so diversified in condition. In many of the old congregations, there are endowments which have grown in value with the growth of the country, and which now serve to relieve the people of a large portion of the expense. A farm bought for that purpose, and a house erected when land and materials were cheap, become valuable and useful in time. There is a common practice of

* It should be remembered that all the expenses of the general government (in time of peace) are paid by the importation duties.

erecting a church by contributions, and then renting the pews, for the support of the clergyman. No general rule is, however, applicable to this particular branch of expense; but as no one taxes himself beyond his own pleasure, and as churches are, for the circumstances, exceedingly numerous, it is fair to presume that the population do not find the expense of supporting the clergy burthensome. Trifling additional taxes are also laid in the counties and towns to defray local expenses, and, among others, for the maintenance of the common schools. These taxes also vary according to circumstances, the county which is building a court-house and jail, or which is engaged in any other public work, paying more at the moment than the county which has already discharged that duty. The *whole* tax paid on a farm valued at 5,000 dollars in one of the older counties of New-York, was five dollars. This included every charge for that year, though the assessment is subject to variations, being sometimes more and sometimes less. As the United States, in point of fact, imposes no taxes in time of peace, this charge was all the owner of this farm had to pay (as such) for the entire protection of government. It is true he contributed something in the way of duties on imported goods, but that is a contribution that depended entirely on his personal expenditure. The impositions of the general government are, as you already know, commonly much lighter than those laid in other commercial nations.

In order to make a correct estimate, however, of the comparative rate of the taxes paid by the American, it is necessary to consider the value of what he receives. He is required to pay for improvements in the country, which produce a direct influence on the increasing value of his property. The income and the price of his farm keep equal pace with the growth of the settlement in which he lives. He en-

joys the means of giving a creditable education to his children, within a reasonable distance of his own dwelling, and all for the sum included in the State tax, if the cost of school-books, paper, &c. be excepted. He is certainly compelled to devote more or less of his time to working the highways,* but then he takes care that the route by his own door shall be kept in as good order as that by the door of any body else.

As a whole, the public impositions in America, including taxes, duties, labour, militia service, clergy, and every thing else, are exceedingly light. But it is absolutely impossible to give any particular example which shall not be liable to so much exception as to destroy it as a rule. So much of the contribution is returned in the way of improvements which affect the value of the property taxed, that, had I all the statements in my head, I do not know that I could give you a clear idea of their relative amount. All those local impositions which exist in other countries, as octrois, &c. &c. are utterly unknown here.

I have heard it imputed to America as a fault, that her system leads to the loss of time and money in excessive litigation. It is said that there are more suits at law here, than among any similar number of people in the known world. Although I cannot pretend to say that the fact is so, I should be surprised to learn that it was otherwise.

The whole territory of the United States covers 2,000,000 of square miles. It is true that the title to more than half of this immense surface still exists in the government, where a vast deal of it will probably continue for ages. But, in order to bring our

* This imposition is laid according to the property of the individual. A commutation in money at a very reduced rate is allowed, but it is impossible to give its amount, since it is an assessment that diminishes with the improvement of the country.

calculations within the bounds of exactitude, let us again look at New-York. This State has 46,000 square miles of territory, which is owned among, we will say (1828,) 1,750,000 people. Now, to every foot of this land there is a title somewhere. Very little, indeed, is the property of the State. Here, then, is a plain and direct resaon why the 1,750,000 inhabitants should have more questions about land titles than the same number any where else, simply because they are the owners of more of the article in dispute. Land is also greatly subdivided in all the older parts of America, and of course each subdivision has its separate title. Then the rapid transfer of property which is incidental to the condition of a country in progress of settlement, multiplies conveyances, and each new conveyance opens the way to litigation. The revolution, with its changes, also gave birth to disputes which time is just beginning to settle, as indeed it is beginning to settle all other controversies that grow exclusively out of the transfers of real estates.

The United States are, again, a more commercial nation, compared with their population, than any other in the world. Among such a people legal disputes must, of necessity, arise. Justice is comparatively cheap, and easy of access. Men have confidence in her decrees; and the fear of power, influence, and corruption, is unknown. In such circumstances, wrong-headed persons, who are ever apt to fancy themselves in the right, make their appeals to the tribunals boldly. I do not believe that the system of the United States encourages litigation, except as it brings all men before the court on terms not of nominal, but of a true equality. Still I can believe, that the great number of low practitioners of the law who are scattered up and down the country, do induce men to enter rashly into legal contests.

In the older and more regulated States, litigation is far less frequent, *cæteris paribus*, than in those that are more new. The same is true of the proportion of taxes, as compared to the value of property. I am of opinion that, were it not for the great number of country lawyers in America, it would be found that litigation is less resorted to than in many other countries, notwithstanding the unavoidable causes of contention which exist in a new country. The number of the lawyers is undeniably an evil; but, besides being an evil which is likely to correct itself, and which is already beginning to correct itself, it is one that is not without its advantages. They serve to keep alive an active knowledge of their rights among the people; and although much abused as pettifoggers, they make, in common, exceedingly useful and intelligent local legislators.

There is a great fashion of decrying men of moderate acquirements in all things, as if life were not more a matter of experience than of theories. It is much easier to assume than to prove, that a set of profound thinkers would legislate better for a community than a set of active and half-educated men, who are familiar with the practices of the world. All the common passions of man are as well, and perhaps better known to the latter than to the former, and after legislation has provided against the dangers that are coincident to their existence, one must seek the rest of its duties in the world and not in books. But what says experience? It would be difficult to find any one country on earth in which the laws are better adapted to promote the true interests of the community, than in the most, I am not sure I could not say the least, favoured of the States of this republic. And yet legislation is the business of practical men altogether. At all events, they have contrived to obtain quiet and security at a cheaper rate

than other people, and that, too, in many cases under all the unpropitious circumstances of great dispersion and the first stages of society.

It is a rule which applies to all salaries in this country, that little or no allowances are made for the support of mere dignity. The dignity of government is supposed to rest in the people themselves; and among their other provisions for its support, they have taken care to retain most of the money. The President receives a larger sum certainly than is necessary for his mere subsistence; but then the President is liable to a vast number of expenses that other functionaries escape; and, in his case, it is thought politic to bid a little higher than common, in order to command talent. It is not too much to say, that the President of the United States, if a prudent man, can save quite as much money out of his salary, each year, as a first-rate lawyer in practice would gain; and I confess I see but one reason why he has the smallest right to ask any more. He has generally reached a time of life when he retires, that forbids further exertion; and perhaps it is wisest to attach a degree of consideration to this high office, which shall preclude men from descending subsequently to inferior duties. The latter point, however, is one that will certainly admit of dispute, and I do not think the former as strong as it first appears. Necessity will teach men the value of prudence and exertion in early life; nor is this the country that ought to wish to see its chief magistrate setting an example of useless, but attractive splendour. There are no vices so contagious as the corruptions which flow from the excessive use of money; for the desire to possess it, is a passion that all men feel, since it is the medium by which all the ordinary good of life is obtained. The accountableness af the public agents, and the simplicity of men of station, are matters of so vast importance in a republic, that the one should never

be neglected, and as little occasion as possible should be given to make any serious innovations on the other.

We have just had a proof that the government of the United States knows how to give with grace and liberality on a proper occasion. When La Fayette first came to America, he did not proceed on his distant and hazardous expedition empty-handed. The new States were then so poor, and they had been kept, by the operation of colonial policy, so completely dependent on the mother country for supplies, that the contributions of an individual were not without moment to them. The arms and money of the young Frenchman were scarcely less acceptable than his sword and his heart. They had amply returned his love; but it still remained to discharge a debt whose obligations were scarcely less sacred.

During the last session, a bill was introduced, appropriating two hundred thousand dollars in money, and a township of land, to extinguish this debt. It was not pretended that the money borrowed, or rather given (for the devotion of La Fayette to the cause he had espoused knew none of the forms of bargaining) had not been already returned. But the Americans know that their venerable friend has long been a heavy sufferer by the revolution in his own country, and they also know that he took little account of the pecuniary interests of this life. The bill was not passed in enthusiasm, and with the hurry of dramatic effect, but it went through the forms of legislation with calmness and dignity. It was even resisted by one or two sturdy republicans, who paid a tribute to the manliness of the nation, by openly contending that, as the infirm and poorer agents of the revolution were still unrequited, they could no vote to bestow money on another, for services that were performed in common. But a vast majority of the two houses were of opinion that injustice to a part

was no apology for injustice to the whole, and the case before them was one of too disinterested and too brilliant service to admit of a parallel.

The claims of La Fayette on America, cannot, surely, be likened to the claims of even Washington. The immortal patriot of this country owed his allegiance, his services, and his life, to the land of his birth; and his exceeding merit is in the faith and ability with which he discharged the duties. But nature had imposed no such obligation on La Fayette. We may admire and extol the filial piety of the child in its degree; but without it, altogether, the offspring would become a reproach and a subject of scorn before mankind. The stranger who yields his aid under the influence of a general philanthropy, is alone entitled to deep and unqualified gratitude, since the universal obligations of society create indissoluble connexions between the members of families and the citizens of the same communities.

But there was still a loftier claim, in the case of La Fayette, to the homage of a nation. His devotion to the cause of America was a devotion to the interests of humanity. The service he performed was chivalrous in its conception, bold in its moral attributes, and fearless in its execution. He dedicated youth, person, and fortune, to the principles of liberty; and it was fitting that an example should be given to the world, that he who had suffered in such a cause was not to go unrequited. In this view of the case, it was just as incumbent on the Frenchman to receive, as it was the duty of the American to bestow At a time when the servants of despotism and abject submission are receiving such ample gifts for their devotion, it is encouraging to see one splendid instance, at least, of virtue, and disinterestedness, and patient suffering, receiving a portion of the worldly rewards that should be the exclusive property of men devoted to the good of mankind.

TO THE COMTE JULES DE BÉTHIZY,

&c. &c.

Washington, ———

I HAVE just witnessed one of the most imposing ceremonies of this government; I allude to the inauguration of the President of the United States. It took place about noon, on the 4th of March, when the power of the late incumbent ceased, and that of his successor commenced. It was simple in its forms, but it may possess sufficient interest to amuse a few leisure minutes.

Every body was in the Capitol by the appointed hour. As it is altogether a ceremony of convention (with the exception of the oath of office) such persons were admitted to be spectators, as the officers who controlled the proceedings chose. But in a country like this, exclusion must proceed on a principle, and on such a principle, too, as shall satisfy the reason of the community. In the first place, the galleries of the hall of the House of Representatives were thrown open to every body; a measure that in itself served to commence with a system of equality. The floor of the house was next occupied, as a matter of course, by the Senators and Representatives. The foreign ministers and their suites, the officers of the government, including those of the army and navy, ex-members of Congress, and citizens of eminence from distant States, and finally strangers, who were deemed worthy of attention, composed the rest of the assembly.

The officers of the army and navy appeared in uniforms; and as there were a great many handsome and well-dressed women present, the scene was suf

ficiently gay. But here all attempts at display ceased. There were no guards, no processions, no wands, no robes, nor any of the usual accompaniments of an European ceremony.

At the proper time, the President (Mr. Monroe) and the President elect (Mr. Quincy Adams) entered the hall, accompanied by the great officers of state, the judges of the supreme court, &c. &c. The two former took their seats on the sofa of the Speaker, while the others occupied chairs that had been reserved for them. After a short pause, the chief justice of the United States arose, and ascended to the little elevation on which the sofa stands. He held in his hand the sacred volume. Mr. Adams then took the oath, in the presence of the assembly, with solemnity and distinctness. The form was as follows: "I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States, and will, to the best of my ability, preserve, protect, and defend, the constitution of the United States."

With this brief but impressive office, a change in the executive power of this vast republic was effected. The moment Mr. Adams had pronounced the words just quoted, he was the chief magistrate of a great nation, and his predecessor retired to the station of a private citizen.

After a momentary delay, the new President commenced what is called his "inaugural address." It was long, and it was delivered with earnestness and apparent sincerity. It is customary to recognise, on this occasion, the leading principles of the constitution, and for the new functionary to make some manifestation of the particular course of policy by which he intends to be governed. Such professions are, however, rather general than minute, and seldom go farther than a confession of political faith, that depends much more on received axioms than on any private opinions. Still, there was a simplicity in the

air of the President, and in the forms of the ceremony, which irresistibly led to the belief you were listening to professions that were entitled to more credit than those which similar scenes elsewhere are wont to create. When the address was ended, the assembly intermingled; and after the congratulations and compliments proper to such an event, the multitude quietly dispersed. Immediately after, the Senators proceeded to their chamber, where the oath was administered to Mr. Calhoun, who then took the chair of that body, in virtue of his office of Vice-President of the United States. He made a short and pertinent address, and the Senate soon after adjourned. During the course of that, or the succeeding day, Mr. Adams nominated Mr. Clay, the late Speaker of the House of Representatives, to fill the vacancy (Secretary of State) occasioned by his own election to the chair of the chief magistrate. Mr. Crawford, the Secretary of the Treasury, also retired; and Mr. Rush, who had recently been minister in England, was selected to fill the situation. The place of Mr. Calhoun was supplied by a gentleman from Virginia (Mr. Barbour.) With these changes the new cabinet was complete, the other incumbents retaining office. I understand it is a practice for every member of the cabinet to tender his resignation on the election of a new President, which gives the latter an opportunity of making such alterations as he may deem expedient, in the most delicate manner possible. Two of the vacancies, in the present instance, were the results of promotions; and it is understood that Mr. Adams would have gladly retained Mr. Crawford, had that gentleman been disposed to serve.

I confess I have been struck with the imposing simplicity of such a quiet transfer of power. The office of President of the United States is one of great dignity and high trust, and its duties have always been discharged with singular moderation and

zeal. The present incumbent is a prudent and zealous patriot, and there is no reason to distrust his intelligence or intentions.

It is a necessary consequence of an European education, that we should subject all things to the rules that are known to govern life in our quarter of the world. Under these impressions, a thousand absurd and childish theories have been urged among us, concerning the probable influence of such an officer, as the one whose inauguration I have just described. It would teach some of us moderation, though it did not teach us wisdom, did we thoroughly understand the fact, that it is quite as unintelligible to the mass of the Americans how we contrive to get on under our systems, as it is to us how they manage to get on with theirs.

I have already endeavoured to convey some idea of the nature of the private intercourse which the President holds with his fellow-citizens. He is uniformly treated with personal respect, but never with adulation. The tone of the manners of the country is so much opposed to the practices of courts, that artifice itself requires that some sacrifice should be made to simplicity. Whenever the President appears in his official character, he is received with the quiet deference that is due to his office; but whenever he chooses to appear as a private citizen, he does it without exciting more attention than is naturally bestowed on an individual who occupies an elevated and responsible station. The late President (Mr. Monroe) made tours of observation through all the States, and along the whole line of the national frontier. His journey was rather of a public nature, and his receptions, in the towns and States, wore a good deal of a public character. The ceremonies through which he passed were a species of homage paid, in remote quarters of the confederation, to the unity of the nation in his person, though, in no instance, did

they exceed the compliments of the governed to the man who filled a station to which he had been elected by the public will. When, on the other hand, the President chooses to leave the seat of government on his private affairs, he passes through the States like any other citizen, though it is not possible to separate the man entirely from the consideration, or, indeed, from the actual power which attends the office. He journeys, on these occasions, like other people, in the steam-boats and public coaches; and his passages through the towns are distinguished by no other marks of attention than the visits of compliment that he, or any other man of eminence, would naturally receive.

The constitutional power of the President is not trifling, though it is always rigidly subordinate to the law. He is commander-in-chief of the army; but while it might prove some palliation to plead an illegal order issuing from this source, as an excuse for violating any law, it would not be the slightest justification. The only supreme authority in this republic is the law: and the President, not in words, but in fact, is just as much its subject as the meanest corporal in the line. Should he venture to order a subaltern to do an illegal act, the young man might refuse to obey; and should he order him to be punished for his disobedience, there is an authority in the country that would quietly take the supposed offender out of his hands. Now this is not a naked theory, but a rigid fact; and the consequence is just what it should be. Those who wield the public power for the time being, take all possible care never to be legally in the wrong; for they well know, that neither influence, nor situation, nor fear, nor any other cause, can save the offender from open accusation before the nation. It is easy to say that such a system must give rise to insubordination and tumult, and a thousand other evils; but where is the proof?

The discipline of the army and navy of the United States is as good as those in other services, though submission to arbitrary power is far from being as common. All the authority is here, though it is not in the same hands as elsewhere.

I have mentioned this fact to show you, that while there exists here the right to command for all legal purposes, there exists no authority to intimidate inferiors into a dangerous submission. These people are born and educated in a state of society, which inculcates deep and settled respect for the laws, without any respect for individuals. The President of the United States is commander-in-chief, it is true; but he could have no security for obedience beyond the point where his views should become doubtful.

The risk is too certain, and the success too remote and doubtful, to leave any temptation before the President to abuse his power. Four years is not time enough to mature a plan that would be dangerous to liberty, especially as the agency of a majority of those who would be the losers by the change, must be employed to insure success. I do not believe you are silly enough to think that ten millions of people, who are excessively impatient of any of the forms of despotism, are likely to be subdued by a four-years' monarch, though he should happen to be another Napoleon; more especially when he can neither obtain, feed, clothe, arm, nor pay his troops, without begging money annually of those whom he would fain crush. If there shall ever be any great alteration in the principles of this government, rely on it, it will proceed directly from a conviction, in the mass of the people themselves, that such a change is necessary to their happiness.

Though the patronage of the President is great, it is subject to all the division of political support. In most cases, he is glad to get rid of the responsibility of appointments, since they oftener endanger, than

aid his popularity. He serves, therefore, rather as a check on vicious recommendations, than as an active source of emoluments and honour. On all high and dignified appointments, he of course exercises a direct influence, because he is supposed to know their duties familiarly, and he ought to know the qualifications of those he wishes to discharge them. But should he be disposed to go wrong, the Senate would not ratify his nominations, and then his power is just nothing. Let us suppose a desire of usurpation.

An unprincipled individual finds himself in the chair of the presidency. He wishes to become a king. He has but two ways of effecting this object; force or persuasion. If he has art enough to effect the latter, he is just as likely to succeed here as the King of England, for instance, would be likely to become absolute by the same means. If he be a man of common discretion, he will know that he must make a party, or his force will amount to just nothing at all. We will suppose him to have blinded the nation as to his real character, and views, and to have selected and secured his agents; two pretty difficult tasks, in the first place, you must allow. He has then got to place these agents in offices of trust, or they are no better than other men. In order to do this, he must deceive, or corrupt, the Senate. But even this difficult task must be done in two years, since one-third of that body go out of office every other year. Well, he has bribed a majority of the Senate, and he gets his tools into power. He then goes to work with the lower house, and soon brings two hundred men, who have been accustomed all their lives to look on him as an equal, to become his dependants. The two houses then give him an army, and vote money freely, in order to bribe that army; for it is out of the question to think that men who have been nursed in liberty, will serve despotism for nothing. Now, we have him, in the short space of two years,

in possession of the two houses, of the treasury, and provided with an army. It is high time he should make a bold demonstration, or a new Congress will require new bribes. He takes the field with a hundred thousand men, and finds himself opposed to a million and a half of citizens unaccustomed to be controlled illegally, and who are bent on resistance. The odds are a little against him, you will allow, even supposing all the traitors he has gained to continue honest men, because they are in his service. I will leave him to fight this second battle of Armageddon, under the auspices of those wise heads, who think they see signs in the clouds, and portents in the air.

The legislative authority of the President is entirely negative. In this respect, he possesses much power to do good, and none to do evil. His signature is necessary to make a law, perhaps; but, if two-thirds of both houses vote in its favour, he dare not withhold it. He has, therefore, rather more of a voice than any one, or any twenty members, without, in truth, forming a separate estate. As he acts under a higher responsibility, and it is supposed, with a greater familiarity with the interests and policy of the country, than the ordinary legislator, his influence should be greater without putting it in his power to defeat the intentions of Congress. It is easy to suppose cases in which the President can do much good. We will take one that is the most obvious. The confederation is nearly equally divided into slave-owning, and what are called free States. These happen to be, just now, eleven of the former, and thirteen of the latter. In a few years more, the numbers will probably stand thirteen to fourteen. Now each of these States has two votes in the Senate, without whose concurrence no law can be enacted. The superiority of the representation of the free States, in the popular branch, can effect nothing on any question that may

be supposed to touch the delicate interests of slavery, without obtaining the acquiescence of the Senate. It is not easy to imagine a case when, at least, two of the northern Senators would not be inclined to moderate views, should a contest arise that seriously involved any of the more important interests of the Union, and which was likely to divide men into sectional parties. But should parties in Congress ever proceed so far as to produce, by a trifling majority, (it could not be a large one without materially uniting northern to southern men, or *vice versa*,) a law that should threaten serious danger to the harmony of the confederation, the President has power to send it back, and to demand that a question of this magnitude should receive the assent of a number, that must, of necessity, include a concesssion on one side or the other; and concession, as you well know, is a great step towards harmony. It is just as likely that the President, in the first place, should be a southern man, as a northern man; and then he is expected to be, and, in point of fact, is, commonly, above all the ordinary excitements of legislative contests. The nation which, rarely, I may say, never, enters very blindly into the party heat which affects all legislative bodies, would expect moderation in the President, and would support him in it. That such a case has not arisen, proves nothing but the difficulty of obtaining even a legislative majority on irritating and alarming questions; for it is certain that in one instance, at least, such a question has been agitated. I mean the law for the admission of the State of Missouri, (with the privilege of holding slaves.) Had Congress passed that law, and had the President good reason to think that it would seriously endanger the harmony of the confederation, he must have been an impotent man indeed, not to have insisted that it should receive the support of an unequivocal majority. I do not believe that a refusal to admit Missouri to the Union,

(with the privilege of holding slaves,) would have produced any other immediate result than applications to Congress to change their resolution; and time would therefore be given for the executive, (as well as the nation,) to estimate and weigh the consequences, even in the event of indecision on the part of the President; and it is scarcely possible to conceive a case, in which executive influence, and evident danger to the confederation united, could not produce a change of two votes, especially as the constant changes in the members themselves, admit of such an interference without involving personal vacillation.

This is one among a hundred similar familiar means, by which any great danger that is likely to arrive to this confederation, may, and would be avoided.

The President also possesses the power of referring a question to Congress, in order to demand a majority of two-thirds on any question of general policy. That public opinion will prevent the abuse of this power, through vexatious interferences with legislation, is known by experience, since it is difficult to conceive a case, unless of extraordinary magnitude, in which an officer so directly amenable to and dependent on public opinion, not only for his authority, but for his comfort, would dare to offend. The long neglect of the prerogative in England, is sufficient evidence of what public opinion can do in a case like this. But the neglect of the prerogative in England does not infer a necessary neglect of the salutary power of the President, since there is no *jealousy* of the exercise of the latter, the person who holds it being so shortly to be brought back into the bosom of the nation as a private citizen. In short, this is a power only to be resorted to in cases in which the moderate and the wiser majority of the whole people would be of one mind; and it is one

that it might then be more injurious to neglect than to use.

The President commissions all the officers of the general government, except those, who, by law, receive their appointments from other functionaries. The judges of the United States' courts hold their offices during good behaviour.* With these exceptions, all other officers of the United States' government can be removed by the President. There are a great many officers of this government whose commissions are given but for four years; and though they are commonly recommissioned, it is in the power of the President to pass them by if he should please. You remember, of course, that in all cases which Congress has not named, by a law that can at any time be repealed, the assent of the Senate is necessary to an appointment.

In the army and navy, a regular system of promotion has been necessarily adopted; and as the Senate, without a good reason, would not confirm any irregular nomination, preferment, in those two branches of the public service, is always in due course, except in cases where character is implicated. So admirable is the practice of checks and balances throughout all the departments of this government, and so powerful and certain is the agency of public opinion, that no political management, except in cases that, by common consent, are thought to come fairly within the scope of political manœuvrings, can easily be exercised. The most commendable impartiality is observed in those appointments, which, in their nature,

* The judges of the State courts hold their offices by different tenures. Some are during good behaviour; others can be removed by the governors on a presentation by two-thirds of the two legislative bodies (which is, perhaps, the wisest provision of all;) others serve until sixty years of age, as in New-York; and some until seventy, as in Connecticut. All are, of course, liable to impeachment.

should be kept superior to party influence. The President cannot advance his son a step in either of the two services named, unless the Senate consents; and the Senate would not consent, unless the young man had clearly done something to merit the reward.

A case occurred a few years since, which goes to prove the truth of what I tell you. A meritorious lieutenant of the navy, who was entirely destitute of the influence of connexions, came under the displeasure of some of the powers about the department under which he served. His name was omitted in the nominations to the Senate, and juniors were promoted over his head. Unprotected, and supported only by the truth, this gentleman went to Washington, and laid his case before the Senators. He convinced them that justice had not been done him; and the executive, in order to get other nominations confirmed, was obliged not only to promote this gentleman, but to give him a commission that restored the rank he had lost. Here was a clear case of justice, in opposition to influence; for if the officer had been guilty of any offence, he was subject to a code of laws that, Heaven knows, is severe enough. If any man believes that such a system destroys discipline, let him go on board an American man-of-war, and examine for himself. In my opinion, it has a contrary effect, by placing inferiors less in the power of their immediate superiors, and by consequently rendering both parties equally watchful.

In relation to the more ordinary civil appointments, the executive of the United States adopts a sufficiently discreet and useful course. The situations are, in general, well filled, and such a thing as a sinecure does not exist in the whole government. The President is, in fact, so far removed from the familiar and personal interests of society, that it is not difficult for him, even in a country as democratic as this, to preserve a dignified moderation. One

hears a great deal said, in the United States, of management and intrigue; but it is necessary to remember, that intrigue here, even when successful, does no more than a downright dogged power does elsewhere: and then it is always necessary to recollect, that the Americans, in complaining, compare themselves with the abstract right, and not with other people. Should one-tenth part of the executive abuses exist here that exist elsewhere, the world would ring with clamour.

You may form some idea of the truth of this opinion, by an anecdote I shall mention. A New-York merchant gravely assured me, that his countrymen were in a bad way; that corruption had made great strides among them; and that he saw the downfall of the nation in its advances. I begged he would mention a fact. Leading me into a corner, he solemnly assured me, in a half whisper, that he *knew*, of his own observation, that one of the clerks of the custom-house of that city was in the habit of taking fees that the law did not sanction. You may depend on it, Jules, I gave him a sharp look, to see that the fellow had no double meaning; and then, convinced of his sincerity, I thought it no more than humane to offer the consolation of assuring him that these things sometimes happened elsewhere. Now, is all this owing to simplicity, and a new state of society? It is a pity, then, it does not exist all over this continent. The President possesses the right to fill all vacancies that occur, during the recess of the Senate, by commissions that shall be valid until the termination of the next session, unless full appointments shall be sooner made. This power is in no danger of abuse, since the President himself can be removed with nearly the same ease as any other incumbent.

The authority of the President over the army and navy, though that of a general or an admiral, as well as of a civil magistrate, is always exercised by deputy.

The Secretaries of the two departments are his organs, and they sign the orders with their own names. Washington took the field, as President, to suppress the Pennsylvania insurrection; and, to his everlasting honour be it said, he effected his object without shedding one drop of human blood.

The President has a full, unequivocal power to pardon all criminals, except in cases of impeachment. It has been said (by Blackstone and Montesquieu) that this power is incompatible with the nature of a democratic government. I know no better answer to an argument than a fact, and the fact undeniably is, that the most democratic communities of the world exercise it with perfect safety. The mistake of these two writers only shows how very easy it is for the most acute minds to get so enveloped in prejudice, as in some measure to impair the faculties. The essence of the difference between a democracy and a despotism is not so much in the amount of the power wielded, as in the manner in which it is created.*

I believe I have now given you a hurried outline of the authority and office of the President of the

* It is surprising what vague and obstinate notions of government people acquire by habit. In America, the writer was several times asked how it was possible that one man could control the interests of a whole community; and in Europe, he has often been pressed to say whether there is any authority in the United States to repress the most common evils. If these worthy thinkers on civil polity would take the trouble to tax their intellects a little, they would see that necessity is a judicious legislator, and that no country can exist long, without such a state of things as shall render society reasonable, quiet, and secure. The great point of difference is in the forms by which its objects are effected. There is no doubt that one people can do things that would be fatal to the order of another (for a time at least) and it is quite certain that they who can get all that government aims at, in the cheapest and simplest manner, are the best off. The great desideratum is, to add security to freedom of personal efforts; and this is a point that varies in different situations of the world, just as much as intellect and intelligence themselves vary.

United States. He possesses a reasonable portion of power, but its exercise is balanced by a number of constitutional checks, and, what is not less available in the present state of the world, by the watchfulness and force of public opinion. Society must materially recede before this high functionary can easily abuse his trust; and when that happens, the Americans, in common with the rest of the world, must be content to return to the political condition from which all our ancestors emerged. It is important, also, to remember that the character, qualifications, and usefulness of a President, are pretty generally sifted to the bottom, before the individual reaches the station at all.

TO THE ABBATE GIROMACHI,

&c. &c.

Washington, ——

You inquire concerning the state of religion in the United States. I presume you ask the question in reference to its outward and visible signs, since it is not to be supposed that a layman, like myself, is sufficiently versed in its mysteries to go deeper than that which is apparent.

You know there is no establishment. Congress is prohibited by the constitution from creating one, and most (I believe all) of the State constitutions have the same provision. In point of fact, there is none whatever. The clergy, and all that pertains, therefore, to religion, are supported by voluntary contributions, or by endowments that have been made by devises, gifts, and other private means.

The first point to be considered, is the number and the nature of the sects. If the Presbyterians and Congregationalists, between whom there exist mere shades of difference in discipline and opinion, shall be considered as forming one sect, they are certainly the most numerous. It is computed that they possess near three thousand congregations. The Baptists are known to have more than two thousand. Perhaps the Methodists rank next in numbers. The Protestant Episcopal church is greatly on the increase. I find, by the Ecclesiastical Register, that it contains ten bishops, and three hundred and ninety-four clergymen.* Most of the latter are settled, and many have two or three congregations under their charge. There are a good many Friends (Quakers)

* It may be interesting to those of a similar faith in England, to understand the constitution of this church in the United States. Where there are Episcopalians enough, the diocese is confined to a single State. But, as there are ten bishops, and twenty-four States, it is plain that several of the States are contained in one diocese. There are, in point of fact, however, eleven dioceses, that of Delaware being vacant. The highest spiritual authority known is, of course, a bishop. Priests and deacons being all the orders named in the Bible, are all the other orders known or used in America. The highest authority is exercised by the general convention. The general convention is composed of two bodies, a house of bishops, and a house of lay delegates. Each diocese has a convention for the regulation of its own affairs. The general convention consists of the bishops, who form the house of bishops, and of laymen, who are sent as delegates from the State convention. The object of this body is to promote harmony and uniformity of doctrine in the whole church. The State conventions contain the clergy of the diocese, and a lay delegation from each church. In both conventions, the clergy (or bishops, as the case may be) and the laymen vote separately, a majority of each being necessary to an ordinance. Clergymen are presented by their congregations, and bishops are elected by the conventions of the diocese, and are approved of by the house of bishops. There is no salary yet given to any bishop, though provisions to a reasonable amount are making for that object. At present, they are all rectors of churches. The oldest bishop for the time being, is called the presiding bishop, though he enjoys no exclusive authority. There have been, in all, twenty-one bishops of this church in the United States, and they hold their ordination

in Pennsylvania, New-Jersey, and New-York. The two former States were originally settled by religionists of this persuasion. The Roman Catholics are the most numerous in Maryland and Louisiana. The first was a Roman Catholic colony, and the latter has, as you know, been both French and Spanish. The Floridas must also contain some Catholics. Many of the Irish who come to this country, and who are settled in the more northern States, are also Catholics; but, including all, I should not think they rank higher, in point of numbers, than the sixth or seventh sect, after allowing for all the subdivisions among the Protestants themselves. There are some Lutherans and Moravians, and a great variety of less numerous or local sects.

The most important point that is proved by the condition of this country, is the fact that religion can, and does, exist as well without as with the aid of government. The experiment has been tried here, for two centuries, and it is completely successful. So far from competition (if I may use so irreverent a term on so grave a subject) weakening, it increases its influence, by keeping zeal alive. While the Episcopalian clergyman sees the Presbyterian priest existing in his neighbourhood, and enjoying all the advantages that he himself enjoys, he is clearly obliged to do one of two things; either to abandon the race, or to contend with watchfulness and care. Now, this is exactly what is done here. The clergy are as chary as women of their characters, for they are certain of being proved, not by tests of their own establishing, but by those established by their competitors.

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from the archbishops of Canterbury and York, and from the non-juring bishops of the Episcopal church of Scotland, jointly.

The law recognises these authorities to a certain extent, as it does the authorities of all other churches. The Catholics have their archbishops and bishops, the Methodists their bishops, and the Presbyterians, Baptists, &c. &c., their own particular forms of government.

You may be inclined to ask if such a rivalry does not lead to strife and ill blood? Just the contrary. Each party knows that he is to gain, or to lose influence, precisely as he manifests the practice of the doctrines he teaches: and that, I apprehend, so far as Christianity is concerned, is charity and forbearance. At all events, with now and then an insulated and rare exception, great apparent good-will and cordiality exist among the clergy of the different sects; and, I fancy, it is precisely for the reason that there is nothing to be gained, and a good deal to be lost, by a different line of conduct. This is considering the question solely on its temporal side, but you know I commenced with professing ignorance of the spiritualities.

Freedom of thought on matters of religion, is so completely a consequence of intellectual advancement, that it is impossible to prevent men who think much from doing one of two things; they either choose their own course, in secret, or they become indifferent to the subject altogether. I have always been of opinion that sects carry their articles of faith too far, since it is next to impossible to get two intellectual men to view any long series of metaphysical propositions in precisely the same light; and it would be better to leave them to the dictates of their own consciences, and to the lights of their own intelligence in lesser matters, after they are once fairly of a mind on the more material truths of their creed. This desirable object is obtained in the United States, to a certain degree, though not entirely, by allowing every man to choose his church, without attracting comment or censure. Charity is a consequence of such a state of things, at least that charity which manifests itself outwardly. The true object of religion is, to teach men the path to heaven, and that is an affair more affecting the individual than any body else. The moment society ceases to take the abso-

lute direction of the matter into its own hands, individuals interest themselves rather than lose the object· and, unless they do interest themselves, under any system, I believe we are taught to think that establishments will do them no great good.

Still society has a worldly interest in the existence of religion—granted. But if it can obtain its object without an establishment, of what use is the latter? It is true, one does not see as many churches in a given number of square miles in America, as in a given number of square miles in France or England: nor are there as many people to use them. In order to institute a fair comparison, all things must be considered. In the first place, I am of opinion that the Americans have more places of worship than twelve millions of people in any other country of the globe; and if the peculiar condition of the new States be considered, I believe they have, in point of moral truth, twice as many. I am quite willing to admit that the cheapness of construction, the freedom of opinion, and necessity itself, may all contribute to produce such a result, but I cannot see how this negative proof is to demonstrate that religion suffers from the want of an establishment. Let us examine the progress of the sects in a parish.

Ten miles square of wilderness is laid out in a township. Settlers come into it from all quarters, and of all denominations. The State has reserved a few hundred acres of land, perhaps, for the support of religion. The first thing commonly done, is to erect a shop for a blacksmith, and there is generally an inn near it, both being, of course, established in some convenient place. The school-house, or three or four of them, soon follow, and then people begin to think of a church. During the time that force for so important an object has been collecting, itinerant teachers, missionaries, &c., sent from the older parts of the country, have been in the habit of collecting the

people in the school-houses, barns, or some other building, in order to keep alive the remembrance of holy things. I think it may be taken as a rule, that few settlements, in the more flourishing parts of the country, exist fifteen years without reaching the church-building age. Some do it much sooner, and others, certainly, require more time to mature their efforts. But the church (the building) must have a faith, as well as its builders? Not necessarily. Churches are frequently built and kept in abeyance for a maturity of opinions, though nineteen times in twenty the very disposition to erect a church presupposes an understanding as to the denomination it is to serve. In coming to this understanding, the minority are, of course, obliged to yield, which is precisely what they would have to do if there were an establishment. But an establishment would keep men from error. Let us see how the truth lies on this point. How do the establishments of Scotland, England, Denmark, France, and Turkey, for instance, agree? It is quite plain, I think, that establishments have nothing to do with truth; and is it not equally plain, by the example of this country, that they are not necessary to the existence of religion? But America was settled by religionists, and the spirit they infused in the country is not yet extinct! Admitted. Is there any more likelihood, had the ancestors of the Americans been Atheists, that the present generation would create an establishment, than that it would receive religion in sects? Did the apostles come into favour under an establishment? Or would not a country be more likely to receive religion in forms to suit tastes and opinions, than in any one form that could not suit all faculties, or appease all judgments? Here then, I think, we have some reason to believe that establishments neither introduce nor keep religion in a country. But let us go back to our settlement.

The church is built, and as the Presbyterians have given the most money, and are far the most numerous, the priest who is called is of their persuasion. Those who are firm in their own particular faith, cherish it in secret; and when the proper time comes, they join a congregation of their own people. They could do no more, if the church was built under an establishment. Those who are not very rigid in their faith, most probably drop quietly into the communion of the church they find so convenient. An establishment would compel them to do precisely the same thing. In the course of a few years more, however, the people begin to separate, or rather to follow their own opinions; and then every thing settles down as quietly as men choose their wives, or make any other important selection that they have reason to think is particularly interesting to their individual happiness. But does not all this intermingling and indistinctness produce disorder and confusion? Just the contrary. While society is in its infancy it produces harmony, by inducing mutual support; and it weakens prejudice, and is fatal to superstition, by bringing the former in subjection to all it wants to destroy it—familiarity: and by rendering the other obnoxious to the ridicule and exposed to the reason of competitors. It is a known fact, that a century ago, the American religionists were among the most bigoted of their respective sects; and it is just as true now, that they have immensely improved, and that they are daily growing still more reasonable, as familiarity with each other teaches them how very little better any one man is than the rest of his fellow-creatures.

But it will become necessary, in time, to make some use of the land which has been reserved for the support of the gospel. How is this to be done in such a manner as not to give offence to the minority? You will recollect that this fund has been created in the most insensible manner, and not by the

aid of any imposition that is felt by the citizen. It is not so much a measure of general policy, as one that is intended to aid, to a reasonable extent, the wishes of the majority. Were there Jews or Mahomedans enough in the land, to make such a measure necessary, I take it for granted, they would get their share. It is the great merit of this government, that it does not aim so much to satisfy theories as to produce wholesome practical results. It is the great fault of its enemies, that instead of looking at it as a government should be viewed, in its worldly and positive aspects, they are for ever endeavouring to find some inconsistency in theory which shall appease a sense of secret uneasiness, that is beginning to get a little too prevalent for their complacency, that it is a more enviable state of society than they wish to believe.

As respects the matter in question, the people of New-York (for it is altogether an affair of the individual States,) have seen they must do nothing, under the most favourable circumstances for doing a great deal for the support of religion, or they must incur the risk of invading some perfectly dormant principle of a bald theory. They give land, which is of no value at the time, leaving the people to dispose of it when it does become of value. We will suppose this reservation now to be worth a division. The inhabitants of the town are then required to make their election. Every congregation, which is in truth a congregation, gets its share, and there the business is disposed of. The infidel, or the man of indifference, or perhaps a solitary Catholic, gets nothing, it is true, for he does not want it. You will at once see that this sort of provision is of use only to those who go through the hardship of settling a town, since their successors may have different religious persuasions; but it is meant for the encouragement and consolation of those who do undergo the

privations incident to such a service. The best possible proof of the wisdom of the measure is, that it does good, without doing the least harm to any body. I can readily understand that they who have been long accustomed to quarrel, and to see others quarrel about the temporalities of churches, will find a thousand difficulties in disposing of such a grant as this I have named; but fact is daily proving here that it can be done, when men are once accustomed to meet on such occasions in a spirit of amity, without any difficulty at all.

I remember to have held a conversation with an innkeeper, who resided within a few yards of an edifice that was then in the course of erection as a place of public worship. I asked him the denomination of the people to whom it belonged. His answer was, "The Presbyterians." "And you, you are a Presbyterian, no doubt?" "No, I was baptized in the Episcopal church, and I must say, I like it best after all." "Ah, then you have nothing to do with the cost of building this house?" "I have paid my share." "But how is this, you pay for the support of a church to which you do not belong?" "I do as I please, and I please to help my neighbours, who will help me in some other way, if not in this; besides, they are Christians as well as myself: and I mean to have a pew, and go and hear their parson till I can hear one of my own church." "But you may be converted?" "Well," he said, smiling, "then I shall be a Presbyterian, and my wife and myself will be of the same mind; we are not afraid of looking the truth in the face in America, let it come out of what pulpit it may."

In fact, the utmost harmony and good-will prevails among the different sects. Controversy is but little known, though I have been present at a dispute of a very remarkable character. The parties were a Baptist and an Universalist. They met in a field at an

appointed hour, and the ceremonial of the rencontre was arranged with as much precision as if they had met for a less pacific interview. They were to be placed so many feet asunder, in order that their voices should be audible. They were to speak alternately, and by the watch, so many minutes at a time; and each was to confine himself, according to an established protocol, to a certain set of opinions, during particular hours. The audience stood around as silent listeners.

It was a remarkable, and not an uninteresting scene. As you may suppose, the learning brought into the combat was none of the deepest, but the zeal and native shrewdness were great, and the discretion was admirable. I left the mooted point in as much doubt as I found it, though a great deal of absurdity was disposed of in the controversy, in a rough but sensible manner. This exhibition was, of course, as much of a novelty to the people of the country as it was to me.

I witnessed other scenes, that were alike impressive and beautiful. The Methodists have, at stated periods, what are called camp meetings. They assemble in thousands in some wood, and hold their religious festivals in a manner that is as striking by its peculiar simplicity, as it is touching by the interest and evident enjoyment they experience.

It is a fashion to ridicule and condemn these meetings, on the plea that they lead to excesses and encourage superstition. As to the former, the abuse is enormously exaggerated; though, beyond a doubt, there are individuals who attend them that would seek any other crowd to shield their vices; and as to the latter, the facts show, that while new and awakened zeal, in ignorant persons, frequently breaks out in extravagance and folly, they pass away with the exciting cause, and leave behind them tender consciences and a chastened practice. What are the

weaknesses of these men, to those that are exhibited in countries where faith is fettered by the law? Or, if you maintain an establishment, and let men follow their private opinions, in what does America differ from other countries, except in things that are entirely dependent on the peculiar temporal condition of the republic, and which could not be avoided, if the citizens were all in full communion with the church of Rome itself?

It is a mistake to believe that the liberality on religious subjects, which certainly exists to so eminent a degree in this country, is the effect of there being no establishment. On the contrary, the fact that there is no establishment is owing to the liberal institutions, and to the sentiments of the people. You will remember, that the same political right to create establishments is to be found in the State governments, here, as is to be found any where else. *All* power that can belong to governments, and which has not been ceded to the United States, is the property of the States themselves, in their corporate capacities. It is true that most of them have decreed, in their constitutions, that no religious tests shall be known; but it is necessary to remember who have framed these imperative and paramount ordinances. The powers, too, that decreed these limitations can change them. But let us examine into the actual state of the law on this interesting subject.

The provision contained in the constitution of the United States is altogether prohibitory. It goes to say, that the government of the confederacy shall pass no law to create a religious establishment, or to prohibit the free exercise of religion. It is contained in an amendment, and is embodied in a paragraph which exposes rather a declaration of the limits of congressional power, than any concession of power itself. The object of this amendment was unquestionably to afford a clearer evidence of the public mind, and to

set at rest for ever any questions which, by constructions of any previously-conceded rights, might by possibility arise on matters of such importance. Still the declaration that Congress shall not have power to do this or that thing, only leaves the individual States more unequivocally in possession of the right to do it, since they possess all the rights of government except those conceded to the Union.

New-England was settled by the Puritans. Whatever might have been the other good qualities of these zealots, religious liberality was not one of their virtues. It argues a somewhat superficial knowledge of the subject to contend that the Americans owe all their mental advancement, and freedom from prejudices, to the circumstance that they came into the country as reformers. It would be more true to say, that they came as dissentients; but though dissent may, it does not necessarily, infer liberality. The fact is, that no country ever possessed a more odious and bigoted set of laws, on the subject of conscience, than those first enacted by the Puritans. Independently of the little favour that was extended to witchcraft, it was made death for a Quaker to enter several of their colonies! This spirit, which they brought with them from England, was part of that noble and much-vaunted mental gift that the Americans received from the mother country. Fortunately, they had wisdom enough left to establish schools and colleges; and although it is quite probable that many worthy sectarians, who aided in this labour, thought they were merely fortifying their exclusive doctrines, the result has shown that they then took the very measure that was likely to introduce liberality and promote Christian charity in their land.

The Quakers themselves, though less sanguinary, for they did not deal in death at all, were not much more disposed to the intercourse than their eastern brethren. The Catholics in Maryland enacted the

laws that Catholics are fond of adopting, and, in short, genuine, religious liberality was only to be found in those colonies where the subject was thought to be of so little interest as not to invite bigotry. Out of this state of things the present rational, just, charitable, novel, and, so far as man can judge, religious, condition of society, has grown.

The unavoidable collision of sects has no doubt contributed to the result. It was not in nature to embitter life by personal and useless conflicts, and collected force did not exist in situations to produce combined oppositions. The Puritans had it all in their own way in New-England, until time had been given for reason to gather force: and, in the other colonies, adventitious circumstances aided to smother discussions. Liberality in politics, in some degree, drew religious freedom in its train; and when the separation from England occurred, the public mind was prepared to admit of great equality of rights in all things. Slavery, which was certainly retained, was retained much more from necessity than from any other cause.

Still the advancement of thought in America was rather gradual than sudden. Many of the original provisions of the States, on the subject of religion, imply a timid and undecided policy. In New-Jersey no *Protestant can be denied* any civil right on account of religion. This is clearly a defensive enactment. In Pennsylvania, Mississippi, and Tennessee, a belief in God, and a future state of rewards and punishments, is necessary to hold office. In North Carolina, no person who *denies the truth* of the *Protestant religion*, or the divine authority of the Old and New Testament, was capable of holding office. Many of these provisions have been changed, though some of them still remain. There is scarcely a year passes, in which some law, that has been a dead letter, is not repealed in some one of the States, in order to bring

the theory of the government more in unison with the practice. I believe I have quoted, above, all the States in which any thing approaching to religious tests has existed, within the last ten years. Massachusetts has certainly altered its constitution since that period; and a law disfranchising the Jews has just been repealed in the State of Maryland, which you know was originally a Catholic colony.

In New-Hampshire, the constitution *authorizes* the legislature to make provision for the support of *Protestant* ministers; and in Massachusetts, the same duty is *enjoined*. The practice is simply this. An assessment is laid on all the inhabitants according to their estates. It is, like all other assessments in this country, exceedingly light, as its amount is regulated by the people themselves, through their immediate representatives. If a Baptist, for instance, resides in a parish where there is no Baptist church, he is at liberty to prove that he has paid the assessment to a Baptist church any where else; but should he not be disposed to take this trouble, the money is paid to the town collector, who gives it to the church nearest his place of residence, I believe. A similar practice prevailed not long since in Connecticut; but, as I have already said, gradual changes are making, and it is a little difficult to get at the precise conditions of the laws of so many different communities, that are fearlessly adapting their institutions to the spirit of the age.

In Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee, ministers of the gospel are not eligible to the State legislatures. In South Carolina, Kentucky, and Mississippi, they can be neither governors nor legislators. In Missouri, they can fill no other civil office, but that of justices of the peace. In New-York, Delaware, and Louisiana, they can hold no civil offices at all. The constitution of the United States, and of all the other States, I believe, are silent on the

matter; and, of course, clergymen can serve in any situation to which they may happen to be called. In all cases, I understand, the construction put on these regulations is applicable only to men in the actual exercise of clerical functions. The opinions of the whole nation are directly opposed to the union of civil and religious duties in the same person.

I have already told you, and I wish to repeat it, as an important fact that is always to be remembered, that, considering their scattered condition and circumstances, the people of this country manifest great zeal and interest in behalf of religion: I honestly think more than any other nation I know, and I believe it is simply because they are obliged to depend solely on themselves for its comforts and security. Perhaps the activity of the nation has its influence on this as on other things. Mind, I do not say that we see spires and holy places as often here as in Europe: if we did, America would contain twenty times as many places of worship as the largest empire we have, being, Russia excepted, twenty times as large; and the State of New-York alone, with 1,750,000 souls, (1826) would possess two-thirds as many churches as England with her twelve or fourteen millions of people.

English writers have not been ashamed to dwell on the comparative scarcity of churches in this country, compared with those in their own, as if the circumstance afforded any argument of a want of religion in the people. They might just as well quote the fact that there were not as many tombstones, to prove the same thing; or the American might make the circumstance that this country possesses more trees than England, a matter of moral exultation.

You would be astonished to witness the perfect liberality between the sects, which has grown up under this state of things. In the first place, there is nothing temporal to quarrel about, and the clergy

are driven to their bibles for their influence and power. I have asked several members of Congress how many Catholics there were in that body, and nobody knew. I once asked an individual, in the interior of New-York (and in a thriving and beautiful village,) to what denomination a certain person we had just left belonged. "He is an Episcopalian," was the answer. This was disputed by a third person present. Proof was then adduced to show which was right. All parties agreed that the individual in question was a strictly religious man. One insisted that he had seen him commune the preceding Sunday in the Episcopal church. "What of that?" returned the other; "and I have seen his wife commune among the Presbyterians; and every body knows that she and all her family are Episcopalians." But every body did not know any such thing, for the other disputant maintained exactly the converse of the proposition. An umpire was chosen in the street. This worthy citizen "really did not know, but he thought that man and wife were very pious people! Stop," he continued, as he was coolly walking away, "you are right, John; Mr. —— is a Presbyterian, for I paid him the pew money last fall myself; and he would not have collected for the Episcopalians." But even *this* was disputed, and so, determined to settle the point, I went and asked the individual himself. He was a Presbyterian. "But you sometimes commune with the Episcopalians?" "Often." "And your wife?" "Is an Episcopalian." "And your children?" "We endeavour to make them Christians, without saying much of sects; when they are old enough, they will choose for themselves." "But which church do they go to?" "Sometimes to one, and sometimes to the other." "But they are baptized?" "Certainly." "And by which clergyman?" "By the Episcopalian; because my church does not deny the validity of his ordination, though my wife's church disputes a little

the validity of the ordination of the Presbyterian." "And your wife, what does she think about it herself?" "I believe she is of opinion that there is a good deal more said about it than is necessary." And there the matter rested. Now this may, according to some people's opinion, be dangerous intercourse, but, on the whole, I am inclined to think Christianity is the gainer.

Religion is kept as distinct as possible from the State. It is known that Mr. Adams, the President just elected, is an Unitarian; a persuasion that is repugnant to most Christian sects, and yet you see that he is in the chair. People at a distance would infer indifference to the subject of religion from such an excess of liberality, but the fact is, the most zealous religionist in this country knows that the salvation of Mr. Adams' soul is a matter of more moment to himself than to any body else, and that if he be in error, it is misfortune enough, without condemning him to a worldly persecution. Besides, they have sagacity enough to know that there is no more infallible way to give strength to any party that cannot be positively crushed, than by giving it importance and energy by resistance.

The sheriff of the city of New-York, an officer elected by the people, was, a few years ago, a Jew! Now all the Jews in New-York united, would not probably make three hundred voters. Some kind-hearted people got up a society to convert the Jews there, a short time since; and a notice soon appeared in a paper inviting the Jews to meet to concert means of converting the Christians.

Notwithstanding all this, the country is as much, or more, a Protestant and Christian country than any other nation on earth. I merely state a simple fact, on which you are at liberty to reason at pleasure. The sects are about as numerous as they are in the mother country, and all that one hears concerning

Thumpers and Dunkers, and other enthusiasts, is grossly caricatured. They exist, when they do exist at all, as insulated and meagre exceptions; and it is odd enough, that perhaps half of these fantastical sects have been got up by emigrants from disciplined Europe, instead of being the natural offspring of the liberal institutions of the country itself. There is no doubt that many people come from our side of the ocean with strange notions of liberty and equality, and that they either quarrel with the Americans for not being as big fools as themselves, and then set to work, in order to raise up creeds and political doctrines that they fondly hope will elevate man far above any thing heretofore known. In the mean time, the natives go on in their common sense and practical way, and say as little as possible about liberty, equality, or bigotry, and contrive to be the freest and the happiest, as they will shortly be, in my poor opinion, the wealthiest and most powerful nation of the globe, let other people like the prediction as they may.

I shall close this letter with giving you an account of one sect, that is as remarkable for its faith as for its practices. I mean the Shaking Quakers. I have been at three of the establishments of these people, viz. Hancock (in Massachusetts,) and Lebanon and Niskayuna (in New-York.) I believe there is still another establishment, in one of the south-western States. The whole number of the sectarians is, however, far from great, nor is it likely to increase, since their doctrine denies the legitimacy of matrimony, or any of its results. There may be a thousand or fifteen hundred of them altogether.

The temporalities of the Shakers are held in common. They are not an incorporated company, but confidence is reposed in certain trustees, who are selected as managers and guardians of all their real estates, goods and chattels. They are an orderly, industrious sect, and models of decency, cleanliness,

and of morality too, so far as the human eye can penetrate. I have never seen, in any country, villages so neat, and so perfectly beautiful, as to order and arrangement, without, however, being picturesque or ornamented, as those of the Shakers. At Hancock, the gate-posts of the fences are made of white marble, hewn into shape and proportions. They are manufacturers of various things, and they drive a considerable trade with the cities of New-York, Albany, and Boston. They are renowned retailers of garden-seeds, brushes, farming utensils, &c. &c.

Though men and women, who, while living in the world, were man and wife, are often to be found as members of these communities, the sexes live apart from each other. They have separate dormitories, separate tables, and even separate doors by which to enter the temple.

But it is to the singular mode of worship of these deluded fanatics, that I wish to direct your attention. You know, already, that no small portion of their worship consists in what they term the "labour of dancing." Their founder has contrived to lay his finger on one or two verses of the Old Testament, in which allusion is made to the custom of the Jews in dancing before the ark: and, I believe, they also place particular stress on the declaration of Solomon, when he says, "there is a time for all things," among which, dancing is enumerated. It is scarcely necessary to say, that none but the most ignorant, and, perhaps, the weakest-minded men, can join such a sect from motives of conscience. I saw several negroes among them.

I went to attend their worship at Niskayuna. It was natural to suppose that their dancing was a sort of imitation of that of the dervishes, in which enthusiasm is the commencement, and exhaustion the close. On the contrary, it was quite a matter of grave preparation. The congregation (the Shakers) entered

the meeting by different doors at the same time, the elders of the two sexes leading the advance, and one following the other in what is called single file. The men arranged themselves on one side of the room, and the women on the other. Their attire was rigidly simple, and fastidiously neat. It was made nearly in the fashion of the highly respectable sect of Friends, though less rich in material. When silence was obtained, after the movement of the *entrée*, the whole group, who were formed in regular lines, commenced singing certain spiritual songs of their own composition (I believe) to lively tunes, and with a most villanous nasal cadency. These songs were accompanied by a constant swinging of the bodies; and, from this commencement, I expected the access of the infatuated worship would grow by a regular increase of excitement. On the contrary, the songs were ended tranquilly, and others were sung, and always with the same quiet termination. At length, one of the elders gravely said, "Let us labour," just as you hear priests say from their desks, "Let us pray." The men then proceeded with gravity to take off their coats, and to suspend them from pegs; after which they arranged themselves in rows on one side of the room, the women occupying the other in the same order. Those who did not join the sets, lined the walls, and performed the duties of musicians with their voices. At the commencement of the song, the dancers moved forward, in a body, about three feet each, turned, shuffled, and kept repeating the same evolutions during the whole time of this remarkable service. It is scarcely possible to conceive any thing more ludicrous, and yet more lamentable. I felt disposed to laugh, and yet I could scarcely restrain my tears. I think, after the surprise of the ludicrous had subsided, that the sight of so much miserable infatuation left a deep and melancholy regret on the mind.

They appear to have an idea that a certain amount of this labour is requisite to salvation, for I learned that many of the elders had reached perfection, and that they had long since ceased to strive to reach heaven by pirouetting.

Now the laws of the different States where the small fragments of this sect exist, are far too wise and too humane to give their deluded followers any trouble. They are inoffensive and industrious citizens, and, in one or two instances, the courts have interpreted the laws as humanely in their favour as circumstances would reasonably allow. It is plain that the true bond of their union is the effect which concerted action and strict domestic government produce on the comforts of the grossly ignorant; but as the class of the very ignorant is quite limited in this country, and is daily getting to be comparatively still less numerous, there is no fear that this, or any other religious sect that is founded altogether on fanaticism and folly, will ever arrive to the smallest importance.

TO THE PROFESSOR CHRISTIAN JANSEN,

&c. &c.

Washington, ———

—You know not what you ask! I have already sent you an imperfect account (I must confess) of the jurisprudence of the United States, and now you ask me for what you are pleased to call an outline of its civil and criminal law. Do you know there are four-and-twenty States, one district, and four territories in this country, and that each of them has its own laws, varying in some particulars of form and of policy from those of all the rest? My answer shall,

therefore, be very short; nor should it be given at all, did I not know that various absurdities are circulated in Europe, on this very matter, by men who travel here, and who rarely possess a knowledge of, or give themselves the trouble to inquire into, the true condition of the society, whether considered in reference to its conventional tone, or to its positive institutions.

The criminal law of the United States is more sanguinary than that of any particular State. Piracy, treason, murder, robberies of the mail, in which the life of the person in charge is jeoparded, and a few other offences, are punished with death. Crimes committed on the high seas, in certain reservations, such as forts, light-houses, &c., are also punished by the laws of the confederation. Smaller offences are punished by fines, or imprisonment, or by both. Some of the States inflict death for a variety of offences, especially the slave-holding communities; others again are very tender of human life. In New-York, murder, arson, if the building be an inhabited dwelling, and treason, can be punished with death. All crimes that are exclusively military, are punished by the military code of the general government.

The great fault in the exercise of the criminal law, in most, if not all, of the States of America, is a false humanity. The people have heard a great deal, and a great deal justly, of the useless severity of the laws in many European countries, and they very naturally turn with horror from a system, that they are fond of thinking is unnecessary to a nation in their own condition. I cannot say I agree with them. As there is less temptation to crime in the United States, than in any other country, and, as more care is taken to prevent it by the use of education, and the entire absence of legal monopolies, it is as unwise as it is unnecessary to reject those means of preserving the order of society which the experience of all ages has shown to be salutary.

The first and great duty of every government is to remove, as far as possible, all temptations to crime. This is to be done by the admission of equal rights, and by as general a diffusion, as possible, of moral influences. But after these solemn and imperative duties are performed, little can be said against a stern and wholesome exercise of justice. Punishment, in order to be impressive, should be prompt and infallible. The indiscreet use of the prerogative of mercy is one of the great errors of American criminal policy; though it is said that necessity often compels its exercise, as the public penitentiaries cannot hold the convicts that are accumulated by time, and which embrace crimes that elsewhere would sweep the offender from the earth. I should think this argument must prove some fault in the criminal code. It is true, that an immense proportion of the convicts are foreigners, or of the unfortunate race of blacks: but still it is necessary to legislate for things as they are; and if rogues can emigrate from Europe, and a class of ignorant and hapless wretches exist in the State to swell the amount of crime, I should think both policy and justice require that a suitable provision should be made to meet the evil.

I was particularly struck with the fact, that a report of the superintendents of the New-York State Prison, commenced with premises like this: "As the object of all punishment is the reformation of the offender;" now I take it, that the object of the punishments which communities inflict, is for no such purpose. Society punishes for its own protection, though reformation *may*, and when practicable without losing sight of the great and principal cause of legal punishments, it *should* ever be considered as a collateral good, to be effected by the same means. But it is dangerous, indeed, to assume that punishment has no other motive than reformation. If this be true, why do we execute for murder, or why are

so many people taught to believe that He who holds the destinies of the universe has decreed that sinners shall expiate their offences in a lasting condemnation? It is very true, that as we can understand only our relations to the Deity, without comprehending the relations which the Deity holds to us, it may be dangerous, or even impious, to pretend to deduce any reasoning from the great laws of God, which shall be strictly applicable to the obligations which man owes to his fellows. But we all know that the world does not graduate punishments of offences against society for the purpose of amending the criminal, though we may all feel that an object so humane should not be neglected when good opportunities for effecting it are afforded.

America is peculiarly placed as respects crime. It is a young, vigorous, abundant, and a highly commercial country, in which moveable property abounds, and in which it is remarkably exposed to be pilfered by the absence of a rigid police; a sort of protection that is not very suitable to the habits and opinions of its people. The great and increasing intercourse with an old nation, in which crime abounds to an extraordinary degree, and the prodigious facilities of a communication which every day is rendering still more easy, tempt rogues from the mother country to shift their scene of action. Thus, while the country has been acting on a criminal law that is adapted, perhaps well enough, to the degree of temptation which exists in the nation itself, its cities are beginning to swarm with fugitive felons from England, who, under favour of a common language, not only practise all their artifices with equal dexterity as at home, but, what is far worse, who bring corruption into the land, and lead hundreds of youths into the paths of vice. But this is an evil that will correct itself, though I think the good people, especially of the large towns, are little aware that their excessive lenity is not only

mistaken on abstract principles, but that it is peculiarly wrong in a nation, that, however it may go to the root of crime by diminishing temptation as much as possible, must still, for a long time, be exposed to a prodigious importation of vice.

The law of real property, in the United States, is a good deal the same as that of England. Entails are, however, destroyed every where, and the doctrine of descent has, in many of the States, been roughly handled. In New-York—I quote this State oftenest, as the most populous and the most important, though you are to understand that the laws of New-York are strictly applicable only to itself, while they are commonly founded on principles that are general—in New-York, the *father* is the next heir of a child who leaves no issue. This is a wise, a humane, and a natural departure from the dictum of the common law, and it does much good in a country like this. The next of kin inherit, after the father, in equal portions, without distinction of age or sex. The widow is entitled to one-third of the personal estate of the husband, and to the use of one-third of the real estate during life. The husband is owner of all the personals of the wife, and he is the tenant by the courtesy of her real estate, according to the provisions of the English common law. There is, however, a good deal of difference in the rights of husbands and wives in the different States. In some, the property of the woman is much more respected than in others.

The party in possession of property in fee, can devise it, without restriction, to whom he pleases. This is, I think, a wiser provision than the law of France, which renders natural descent, to a certain extent, unavoidable; but the law of France I take to be an enactment that is intended to do away with the custom of entails, which had gotten such deep root in Europe. Rich men, here, often give more to their sons than to their daughters; though it is very

common for men of small fortunes to make the daughters independent at the expense of the sons. Of course, any irregularity or alienation of property from the descent (or *ascent*) prescribed by the law, must be made by will.*

Marriage is, of course, altogether a civil contract. Its forms are, however, more or less artificial, according to the policy of particular States. In some, bans are necessary; in others, evidence that would establish any other contract would establish that of marriage. As a breach of the marriage contract is always criminal, the law requires, in cases of indictments for bigamy, rather more positive testimony than would be required in those of inheritance and legitimacy. Thus, a child would be considered born in wedlock, in many States, under the reputation of matrimony, though a man would scarcely be punished for bigamy, without direct evidence of the two contracts. The policy of the different States, however, varies so much, to suit the particular conditions of society, that no general rule can be laid down. In portions of the country recently settled, it is the practice to make the contract before a justice of the peace, as in many parts of New-York; but then, a justice of peace has no more power to celebrate a marriage than any other man. It is thought that his testimony, as

* The writer is hourly acquiring evidence of the gross ignorance concerning the United States, which travellers are importing into Europe, where, Heaven knows, enough has long existed. He has lately read a book, written by an Englishman, in a sufficiently amicable spirit, which says that a gentleman of New-York, who is the proprietor of a large estate (40,000 acres) is obliged by law to let it pass to his nephews and nieces! It is possible that, in the case in question, a reversionary interest might have been given by some former owner in fee, to certain nephews and nieces; but any owner in fee (of mature age) can devise to whom he pleases. The law allows devises to go as far as all people actually living, and to twenty-one years after, by fixing age, sex, or any other qualification by which the party to inherit can be accurately distinguished.

a public officer, is more imposing than that of a private individual, and these people always attach high importance to legal rank. People of any condition are always (unless in extraordinary exceptions) married by clergymen.

I can tell you little more that is distinctive in American law, without dealing in exceptions; since, though the governing principles are always the same, the policy of one State differs so much from that of another.

TO SIR EDWARD WALLER, BART.

&c. &c.

New-York, ———

It is an age since I wrote to any of the club. But though my pen has been necessarily quiet, the intervening time has not been unemployed. In the interval, I have run over an immense surface in the southern and western States. It would be idle to attempt to describe all I have seen, and there would be the constant danger of leading you astray by exceptions, should I descend into detail. Still, as there is a great deal that is distinctive, I shall endeavour to convey to you some general ideas on the subject.

The first, and by far the most important feature, which distinguishes these States from their northern sisters, is slavery. Climate and productions induce some other immaterial differences. The laws, usages, institutions, and political opinions, with such exceptions as unavoidably grow out of states of society marked by such distinctions as the use or the absence of domestic slaves, are essentially the same.

There is a broad, upland region, extending through the interior of Virginia, the two Carolinas, and Georgia, where slaves are used, more as they were formerly used in New-York and in the eastern States, than as they are now used in the other sections of the States named. That is to say, the farmer is the master of three or four labourers, and works in the field at their sides, instead of being a planter, who keeps a driver, and what are called gangs. Tennessee, and Kentucky also, with some exceptions, employ the negroes in a similar manner; while on the Mississippi, the Gulf of Mexico, and along the coast of the Atlantic, as far north as the Chesapeake, slavery exists much in the same forms as it is found in the English West India islands.

The country, on the whole coast of the United States, until one gets far northward and eastward, is low and champaign. It is healthy, or not, according to the degrees of latitude, and to local situation. The uplands are invariably salubrious. There is no region on earth more beautiful, or more fertile, than large parts of Virginia, Kentucky, and Tennessee. There is also much barren, or otherwise little valuable land, in the former State, as there is in the neighbouring States of North and South Carolina.

South Carolina and Louisiana are the only two States which, at the census of 1820, contained more blacks than whites. The former had 231,812 white inhabitants, and 258,497 blacks; leaving a balance of 26,685 in favour of the latter. Of the blacks, 251,783 were slaves, being 19,971 more slaves than whites. Louisiana had, at the same time, 73,383 whites, and 79,540 blacks; of the latter, 69,064 were slaves, being rather fewer slaves than whites. All people having black blood are enumerated as blacks. Georgia is the next considerable community, which has so large a proportion of blacks. It had, in 1820, 189,566 whites, and 151,439 blacks. Vir-

ginia had 603,008 whites, and 462,042 blacks; and North Carolina, 419,200 whites, and 219,629 blacks, or nearly two whites to one black. In Kentucky there were 434,644 whites to 129,491 blacks; and in Tennessee, which is much disposed to the habits of a free State, there were 339,727 whites to 82,826 blacks; a proportion of the latter not greater than what formerly existed in New-York and New-Jersey. Most of the blacks, in all these States, are slaves.

In 1790, there were 757,208 blacks in the United States; in 1800, 1,001,729; in 1810, 1,377,810; in 1820, 1,764,836. By making premises of these facts, and taking the past rate of increase as a rule for the future, it would be found that there are now (1828) about 2,000,000 of blacks in the United States. In 1820, there were 233,400 *free* blacks in the United States. As the free blacks do not increase at the same rate as the slaves, this number cannot have accumulated in a full proportion, by natural causes. But emancipation has been busy since. New-York, alone, has liberated more than 10,000 slaves since 1820. We will therefore assume that natural increase and emancipation have kept the free blacks up to the level of the increase of the whole number. This would leave us something like 1,750,000 for the whole amount of slaves in the country, at the present moment (1828.) This result is probably not far from the truth. You will see, however, that my premises are a little faulty, because the increase of blacks between the years 1800 and 1810 was a good deal greater, in comparison with whole numbers, than between 1810 and 1820. This fact is owing to the abolition of the slave trade, which occurred between the two censuses of 1800 and of 1810, and which being known by a prospective law, induced extraordinary importations. Thus the increase between 1800 and 1810 was 376,581, whereas between 1810 and 1820 it was only 387,026, although there was so much

larger a stock to increase from. Still, I think the amount of slaves cannot be much short of the number I have named. The white population, in the whole country, is now about 10,000,000. Of this number, however, at least 6,000,000, and probably a great many more, are in the free States. If we put the entire white population of the slave-holding States at 3,500,000, we shall probably give them quite as many as they possess. This would be making two whites to one slave in those States, and it is probably as near the truth as one can get at this distance of time from the census. But it has already been seen, that in many of these States the proportion of blacks is much larger than in others; South Carolina actually possessing more slaves than whites; and Tennessee having four whites to one black. There are, again, districts in these very States, in which the proportion of the whites to the blacks, and of the blacks to the whites, is even still greater.

In addition to these facts, it may be well to state that the whole white population of the country is known to have increased faster than that of the coloured, though the black population of the southern, or slave-holding States, is thought to have increased a little faster than that of the whites.

In considering the question of slavery, as now existing in the United States, the subject naturally divides itself into the past, the present, and the future. It has been often said, that a people, claiming to be the freest of the earth, ought to have brought their practice more in conformity with their professions, and to have abolished slavery at the time they declared their independence. There are many unanswerable reasons to this allegation; or reasons that will be deemed unanswerable, by that portion of mankind who regard life as it actually exists, in its practical aspects and influences. There is not now, nor has there ever been since the separation of

the colonies from the mother country, any power to emancipate the slaves, except that which belongs to their masters. This reason might satisfy most practical men of the impossibility of instantly achieving so desirable an object. That sort of humanity, which regards the evils of a distant and alien people, and which, at the same time, turns a cold eye on the sufferings of those at hand, is, to say the least, as useless as it is suspicious. There is scarcely a nation in Europe, if, indeed, there be one, that has not a proportion of its population, that is quite equal to the proportion the slaves of America bear to the whites, which is not quite as low in moral debasement, the name of liberty alone excepted, and which, as a whole, endure much more of physical suffering than the negroes of America.

The condition of the American slave varies, of course, with circumstances. In some few portions of the country, he is ill dealt by. In most districts his labour is sufficiently light, his clothing is adapted to the climate, and his food is, I believe, every where abundant. The strongest evidence, after all, which can be given, that the amount of animal suffering among the American slaves is not great, (there are exceptions, of course,) is the fact that they are a light-hearted and a laughing race. I am very ready to grant that ignorance, and absence of care, are apt to produce hilarity, and that some of the most degraded and least intellectual people of the earth, are among the gayest; but I believe that it is a rule in nature, that where there is much animal suffering there is an animal exhibition of its existence.

There is still a higher, and a very numerous class of American slaves, who are far better instructed, better clothed, and better fed, and who are altogether a superior race to the lowest class of the European peasants. I mean the domestic servants, and those who labour as mechanics and artisans.

While on this branch of the subject, I shall take occasion to say, that yearly meliorations in the condition of the slaves (and of the blacks generally,) are taking place in some one part of the country or other. Several unjust and exceedingly oppressive laws, that were the fruits of colonial policy, have been repealed, or greatly qualified; and public opinion is making a steady advance to the general improvement, and, I think, to the final liberation of the race. Although these changes are not as rapid as they might be, even with a due regard to policy, and far less rapid than most good men could wish, it is a course that is more likely to be attended with less positive injury to the race of beings that true philanthropy would so gladly serve, than one as headlong and as ill-advised as mere declaimers and pretenders would dictate.

I think no candid man will deny the difficulty of making two or three millions of people, under any circumstances, strip themselves, generally of half their possessions, and, in many instances, of all. There are few nations in Europe, at this hour, in which the poorer classes would not be relieved from serious pressure, would they, who have the means, tax themselves to discharge the debts which are the causes of so much of the heavy impositions of their respective governments. Now, this would be a measure that would do good to millions, great and almost inconceivable good, and harm to none but to them that paid; whereas, a sudden, or any very violent emancipation of the slaves of America, would ruin those who did it, and scarcely do less than ruin half, or even more, of those in whose behalf the charitable act would be performed. Let me be understood. I do not mean to say that much more than is done might not be done, prudently, and with safety; nor do I mean to say that most of those who find themselves in possession of a species of property, that they have been educated to think a natural and just acqui-

sition, think much of the matter at all; but what I would wish to express is, that they who do think calmly and sincerely on the subject, see and feel all these difficulties, and that they weaken efforts that would otherwise produce an effect more visible than the sentiment which I think is silently working its way throughout the whole of this nation.

In considering the question of American slavery, in reference to the past, it is plain that Europe has been an equal participator in all that there is of shame, or sin, in the transaction. There can be no charge more vapid and unjust, than for an European to reproach the American with the existence of slavery in his country. That the American is in the enjoyment of greater power to do natural justice than the European, is just as true, as that, in most things, he does it. That slavery is an evil of which the great majority of the Americans themselves, who have no present agency in its existence, would gladly be rid of, is manifest, since they have abolished it in so many States already; but that it is an evil not to be shaken off by sounding declarations, and fine sentiments, any man, who looks calmly into the subject, must see. But so far as a comparison between Europe and America is concerned, let us, for an instant, examine the exceedingly negative merit of the former. Is it not a fact that the policy of all America was for more than a century controlled by Europe, and was not this scourge introduced under that policy? Has that policy, in Europe, been yet abandoned? Let us take the two most prominent nations boldly to task at once; does England or France, for instance, at this moment, own a foot of land on earth, where black slaves can be profitable, and where they do not use them?* It is absurd for France, or for England, to

* It is well known that a negro would be next to nothing in the Canadas, &c.

say, we have no slaves in our respective kingdoms, properly so called, when every body knows that the one is at this moment filled with white beggars, and the other with paupers who are supported by the public purse, and both for the simple reason that they are overflowing with population. It is true, that two centuries ago, when they had more room, they did not import negroes from Guinea; but it is, also, just as true, that they sent their ships to convey them to colonies which are situated in climates where they might repay them for their trouble. It is as puerile as it is unjust, therefore, for these two countries, (most others might be included,) to pretend to any exclusive exemption from the sin or the shame of slavery.

The merit of Christendom on the subject of the wrongs of Africa, is, at the best, but equivocal. Yet, such as it is, the meed is better due to the United States than to any other nation. They were the first to abolish the trade in human flesh, though the nation, of all others, that might most have reaped that short-sighted, but alluring profit, which tempted men to the original wrong. Had not the Congress of the United States abolished this trade, there is no doubt millions of acres might have sooner been brought into lucrative cultivation, and the present generation at least would have been millions the richer. The whole body of the whites might have become a set of taskmasters to gather wealth from the labour of the blacks. No doubt true policy dictated the course they have taken, and they have but a very negative merit in pursuing it: still it should always be remembered, that what has been done, was done by those who might have profited in security by a different course, and by those, too, who had been educated in the shackles of a deeply-rooted prejudice on the subject.

In reproaching the Americans with incongruity

between their practices and their professions, two or three points are very necessary to be remembered. In the first place, it is not true, as respects near 7,000,000 of the ten that comprise their population; for *they* have given freedom and (essentially) equal rights to those blacks who remain among them. The very condensation of the interests of slavery adds, however, to the difficulty of the subject, since it makes the loss fall on a comparatively reduced number. The northern men had to do one of two things; to separate their fortunes from a portion of their countrymen, to whom they were bound by the ties of fellowship, blood, common interests, and common descent, or submit to be parties to an union in which some of the other parties were slave-holders. They were, in fact, slave-holders themselves, at the time of the compact, so that it would have been absurd to be very fastidious in the matter; and there would have been but little wisdom in rejecting so much positive good, in order to assert an abstract principle, that could be attended with no single practical benefit. The southern States would have held their slaves, had the northern refused to have joined them to make one nation; and, so far as humanity is concerned, the negroes would not have been so well off, since they now feel the influence of northern policy, while war and bloodshed, and all the evils of a dangerous rivalry that would have arisen between men whom nature had made friends and brothers, are avoided. In short, this is a reproach against the northern man, that is more likely to be made by those who view the Union, and the continued harmony which pervades these vast regions, with unquiet jealousy, than by any reasoning and practical philanthropist.

As to the southern man himself, he is placed, like so many nations of other quarters of the globe, in an unfortunate predicament, that time and society, and all the multiplied interests of life, render so difficult

to change. The profession of the southern man is unquestionably that of equal rights; and it is undeniable that he holds the black in slavery: but this does not involve quite so great an absurdity as one would at first imagine. The slave-holders of the present day (viewed as a body) are just as innocent of the creation of slavery, as their fellow-citizens of New-York or Connecticut; and the citizens of New-York or Connecticut are just as innocent of the creation of slavery as the citizens of London or Paris. But the citizens of the two former States have a merit in the matter, that the citizens of neither of the towns named can claim, since they have stripped themselves of property to give freedom to their blacks, while those who were parties to the original wrong have contributed nothing to the measure they so much urge. But is it not possible to assert a principle under acknowledged limitations? The black man in the southern States of this Union is not considered a citizen at all. It would not be safe to consider him a citizen, in a country of equal political rights, since he is far too ignorant, and must, for a generation at least, remain too ignorant, to exercise, with sufficient discretion, the privileges of a citizen in a free government. It would, if any thing, be more prudent for the Virginian and Carolinian to admit boys of twelve years of age to vote and to legislate, than to admit their blacks, in their present moral condition, without having any reference to the danger of a personal dissension. Equal rights do not, in any part of America, imply a broad, general, and unequivocal equality. It is the glory of the institutions of this country, that they have never run into practical excesses, in order to satisfy craving theories. By equal rights, the citizen of Connecticut, (and, I believe, no man doubts his rational and unlimited freedom,) understands that all who have reached a certain standard of qualification, shall be equal in power and that all others shall be equal in

protection. He does not give political power to the pauper, nor to females, nor to minors, nor to idiots, nor yet even to his priests. All he aims at is justice; and in order to do justice, he gives political rights to all those who, he thinks, can use them without abuse. He would be culpable only, if any class existed in his community, who might, with a little care, freely enjoy these rights, did he neglect to resort to that care. He therefore excludes only those who, on great, general, and lasting principles, are disqualified from exercising political power. The situation of the Carolinian is different, but his principle is quite the same: he excludes more; for, unhappily, when he arrived at the knowledge and the practice of a liberal policy himself, he found a numerous class of human beings existing within his borders, who were not competent to its exercise. He had but a choice between a seeming inconsistency, or the entire abandonment of what he thought a great good. He chose to make all equal, who could bear equality; and in that, he has done exactly what his northern countryman has done, and no more. Should he unnecessarily neglect, however, to qualify these exceptions to enjoy a better state of being, he then becomes inconsistent.

I think these considerations must lead us to the conclusion, that most of the merits of this question lie in the fact of how much has been done and is now doing, towards effecting a change in what is admitted to be a prodigious evil. I feel confident that no discreet father, or husband, or brother, could ask a Carolinian, who was existing in a state of highly polished society, and who enjoyed all the advantages of great moral improvement, to admit, at once, a body of men who had been nurtured in the habits of slavery, with all their ignorance and animal qualities, and who are numerically superior, to a participation of equal political rights. Such a measure would induce

an absolute abandonment of their country and property on the part of the whites, or it would involve a degradation, and abuses that are horrible to reflect on. Individuals may and have parted with their means of personal indulgence to give liberty to their slaves; but it is too much to expect it from communities: nor would discreet individuals do it, if it were to be a general act, since a disorganization of society would be an inevitable consequence.

The true question, and that in which the friends of humanity should feel the deepest interest, is that connected with the steps that are taken to lead to the general emancipation, which must sooner or later arrive.

At the period of the declaration of the independence of the United States, slavery existed in all the British colonies. The blacks were not numerous in the northern provinces, for, there, the white was the better labourer. Still there were slaves in every one of the thirteen original States of this Union. The proportion of slaves in some of the middle States was nearly equal to what it now is in some of the southern. Massachusetts (which in 1790 had 5,463 blacks,) put such a construction on its own bill of rights as abolished slavery. This was the first measure of the sort that was ever taken on the American continent, I presume. The example has been successively followed, at different periods, by all the northern and middle States, until slavery is either abolished in fact, or by laws that have a prospective operation, in nine out of the fourteen States that adopted the present constitution in 1789. You may form some idea of the difficulty of getting rid of such an evil as slavery, by observing the caution with which these comparatively little encumbered States have approached the subject. Perhaps twenty years are necessary to effect the object humanely, even after the policy of a community is perfectly decided.

Numberless influences have, at the same time, been at work, however, to extend the limits in which slavery might exist. Alabama and Mississippi formed parts of Georgia; Kentucky and Tennessee were within the ancient limits of Virginia; and Louisiana, and Missouri, and the Floridas, were acquired by purchase. The people of Virginia and Georgia, in ceding their territory, were not disposed to cede the right of emigration, with the privilege of carrying their wealth with them; and slavery, in consequence, became extended over the four States named. Slaves were found in the two others, and in the Floridas. In this manner the eleven present slave-holding States came into existence. In the meanwhile, the States of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, were organized off what was once called the north-western territory. These, added to the nine States that had abolished the policy of slavery, and by the subsequent acquisition of Maine, brought their whole number up to thirteen.

I think that the influence of free opinions, if I may so express it, is steadily on the increase. It is not the smallest evil of slavery, that it begets in the master an indifference to its existence, and that it gives birth and durability to cruel and lasting prejudices. That these prejudices must be rooted out of the majority of the citizens of the southern States themselves, ere slavery shall cease to exist, is indisputable, since no power but their own can extinguish it. But my friend assures me, that within his recollection, an immense change has taken place in this particular. Twenty years ago, even in New-York, a general and deep prejudice existed against this unfortunate class of human beings. It is rapidly disappearing. It is true, that the sort of commingling of the races, which a certain class of philanthropists are much fonder of proclaiming than they would be fond of practising, does not occur, nor is it likely very soon to occur in this country. Still there is every disposition to do

the blacks justice, though there is none whatever to mingle the blood. I have heard of instances in which human beings of peculiar colour and form were esteemed in Europe as curiosities; but I fancy, if they abounded in any country, there would be found the same natural desire, in that portion of its inhabitants who believed themselves to possess the physical advantage, to retain it, as is now found here. It is odd enough, that Europe, which, for so many centuries, has been making patents of nobility obstacles to matrimony, should decry so loudly against a people who hesitate a little at intermingling colours.

But there will still be a greater objection against this mingling of the races, for at least a long time to come. With few exceptions, the blacks of America belong to an ill-educated and inferior class. When free, they are left, like other men, to look after their own interests; and most of those, who have character and talent enough to rise above the condition of menials, push their fortunes in countries where they are not daily and hourly offended by the degradation of their caste. I think this circumstance must long keep them in a station which will prevent intermarriages. You will admit, too, that matrimony is very much an affair of taste; and, although there well may be, and there are, portions of the world where white colour is not greatly admired, such is not the case here. The deep reluctance to see one's posterity exhibiting a hue different from one's own, is to be overcome, ere any extensive intercourse can occur between the blacks and the whites.

The probable future fate of the blacks of America, is a subject of deep and painful interest. I confess, however, I am not one of those who see any great danger to the whites in their increasing numbers. While they remain ignorant, their efforts must always be feeble and divided, and, as they become enlightened, they must see the utter impossibility of

any continued success in a rising against a force numerically and morally so superior. Although the distances in America seem very great on the map, the inhabitants have contrived the means of bringing themselves wonderfully near to each other. The whites in the whole country increase faster than the blacks; and I think it will be found, that as emancipations multiply, the disproportion in numbers will be still greater, and always in favour of the former. It would not only be the duty of the northern men, but it would be a duty readily performed, to fly, in case of need, to the assistance of their southern neighbours. It is not easy to suppose circumstances in which the white population of the southern States, already (as a whole) two to one against the slaves, armed, intelligent, organized, and possessing the immense moral superiority of their domestic relations, should not be sufficient of themselves to protect their persons and property against a rising. The only circumstances in which the danger could be very imminent or extensive, would be in the event of a foreign war; and then their common country would be a party, and the aid of States that will shortly number of themselves twenty or thirty milllions, could be commanded in their defence.

But the danger of slavery, so far as it is connected with numbers, has its own cure. No man will keep a negro after he ceases to be profitable, any more than he will keep an extra supply of other animal force. If Carolina can bear 500,000 slaves, Carolina will probably accumulate that number; but after she has reached the point where policy says she must stop, instead of resorting to laws to retain her negroes, she will have recourse to laws to get rid of them. This, to an European, and particularly to an Englishman, who knows that excessive population is the greatest burthen of his own country, may seem difficult; but in order to form a correct opinion of a

question purely American, it is necessary to consider the actual state of things on this side of the Atlantic.

The already vast, and constantly increasing coasting trade of the United States, offers an easy, natural, and perfectly practicable drain, to the black population of the south. The blacks furnish, already, thousands of sailors, and quite useful sailors too, and they constitute a very important material of the supply of seamen, in considering the future commercial and nautical power of this confederation. The demand for domestics at the north, too, will, for many years, continue beyond the probability of a white supply. You will remember that experience has shown that the free blacks have very little natural increase, and both these growing demands must therefore meet with most of their supplies from the slave-holding States. Then, again, the proximity of the West Indies, of Mexico, and of the South American States, in which a commingled population already exists, offers facilities for emigration, that Europe does not present. The slave population of the United States may reach 4 or 5,000,000, but (after a very short time) at a diminishing rate of increase,* and then I think it will be found that new means will be taken to get rid of them.

In forming these conjectures, I have not regarded the narrowing of the limits of slavery by the constant advancement of opinion. It is true, that the surface on which slavery, in fact, exists, has, on the whole,

* At present the slave-holder has a motive for increasing his slaves, since he can sell them in the new States; but this demand will, of course, cease as the new States get full. Louisiana has recently passed a law, prohibiting the importation of slaves; a fact which the writer thinks proves the truth of his theory. The reader will always recollect that slaves cannot be *imported* into the United States, but that they can be *transported* from one State to another, unless prohibitions are made by the States themselves. This was part of the original compact, without which the southern States would not have consented to the present constitution

been rather enlarged than otherwise, since the existence of the confederation; but we should not lose sight of the circumstances under which this extension of the slave region has been effected.

It has spread with the diffusion of population, over districts that were originally the property of the slave-holders; and in no respect, except in mere territorial division, has there been any virtual enlargement of its political limits, unless one can thus call the enlargement of the borders of society. It is true, that when Missouri was admitted to the Union, an effort was made by the friends of the blacks (I use the term technically) to abolish slavery in that State. Had they succeeded, it would have been an inroad on the ancient limits; but their defeat ought not to be deemed an extension of the surface occupied by slaves, since slaves were there before. It was a sort of attempt to turn the flank of slavery, or to get into its rear; whereas I think it manifest that the great victory over habits and prejudices, which true policy will be sure to gain in time, is to be gained by pressing steadily on, in an open, manly, but cautious and conciliating manner, in its front. Ardent and steady a friend of universal liberty as you know me to be, I am by no means sure, that, had I been a member of that Congress, I would have given so violent an alarm to the slave-holders of the south, as to have contributed to attempt to carry that law.

It is only necessary to witness the immense superiority that free labour possesses over slave labour, and to examine the different conditions of society in a State without slaves, and in one with, to see that a close contact must be destructive to the principles of slavery. The friends of emancipation have now a noble front, extending from the Atlantic to the Mississippi. I even think that accident has contributed to throw those communities most in advance, which are the least likely to retard the progress of emanci-

pation. The honest and affluent, but quiet population of Pennsylvania, for instance, is much less suited to give the alarm to their neighbours of Maryland, than would be done by the more restless, ever-busy people of New-England; while their example is left to produce its undiminished effect. If I have been correctly informed, public opinion and sounder views of policy are making great progress in the latter State. The inhabitants begin to see that they would be richer and more powerful without their slaves than with them. This is the true entering wedge of argument; and juster views of moral truth will be sure to follow convictions of interest, as they have followed, and are still following, emancipation further north.

The first and surest sign of a disposition to give freedom to the slaves, is the accumulation of the free blacks, since they are not only a positive proof that emancipation exists, but they argue an indifference to slavery in the whole community. In Maryland, there were 145,429 blacks in 1810, and 147,128 in 1820. During the same time, the whites increased from 235,117 to 260,222. Emigration retarded the increase of the two races, no doubt; and yet, you see, contrary to the law of increase in most of the slave-holding States, the whites grew faster than the blacks. Now, of this number of 147,128 blacks, 39,730 were free. This is a very large proportion, and I hail it as a most auspicious omen. In point of fact, there were 4,109 fewer slaves in Maryland in 1820, than in 1810; while the whites had increased 25,105. Indeed, I heard very many enlightened and respectable men in Maryland regret that slavery existed among them at all; and the opinion is getting to be quite common, that free labour is the most profitable. Even in Virginia, the whites have increased 51,474, during the same ten years, while the blacks have increased only 38,954. It is true, the emigration renders these results a little doubtful; but

the fact that there were, in 1820, 36,889 free blacks in Virginia, proves something. It is also of importance, that there exist, in so many of the slave-holding States, large bodies of their respective communities, who have very little interest in the perpetuation of the evil, except as their own personal welfare is connected with that of society. Although the latter influence is one of moment, it is also one that may influence a man both ways, since he may be as likely to believe that the interests of society call for some relief against the evil, as to think he ought to support it.

I have endeavoured to lay this important subject before you in a practical form. It has been done rapidly, and, I am quite certain, very imperfectly. It is proper to understand, there is so much of intimate detail necessary to view the state of American slavery with discretion, that it is highly probable I may have fallen into error; but I still think you will find the views I have taken of it not without some plausibility. I shall sum them up, together with the leading facts, in as few words as possible.

I think liberal sentiments towards the blacks are rapidly gaining ground in most of the southern States.* Positive, political freedom is granted, or is in the course of being granted to them, in thirteen of the twenty-four communities of the confederation. Eman cipation, geographically speaking, has now reached a formidable point of resistance (on account of the numbers of the slaves,) but it is steadily advancing through the powerful agency of public opinion. When it has passed this point, its subsequent march will, I think, be easier and more rapid. Tennessee and Kentucky, the States that flank Virginia, have by no means as deep an interest in the maintenance of

* The writer does not mean that every man becomes in some degree sensible of the evil, but that a vast number do, and of men, too, who are likely to have an effect on legislation.

slavery, as the States further south; and I think it is not chimerical to hope that, by the aid of prospective laws, many are now living who may see slavery limited to the shores of the Atlantic, and to the Gulf of Mexico, with perhaps a belt for a little distance on each side of the Mississippi. In the mean time, the advance of opinion is steady and great. Unless the Christian world recedes, its final success is inevitable. I shall not incur the charge of empiricism by pretending to predict the precise period.

I do not think that slavery, under any circumstances, can entail very serious danger to the dominion of the whites in this country, for at least a century or two. Districts might be ravaged, beyond a doubt; but the prodigious superiority of the whites, in every thing that constitutes force, is the pledge of their power.

I am of opinion that the number of the slaves will be limited, as a matter of course, by necessity. There is a point beyond which they would be a burden. Nor is that point so distant as we commonly imagine. Perhaps it has been already obtained in some of the older States.

I think that the free black population (except in the way of emancipation) does not increase, or, at least, not materially; and that the proportion between the whites and the blacks is steadily growing in favour of the former; that, in future, it will even grow faster; that emigration, the navy, commerce, and unsettled habits, will tend to repress the increase of the blacks, and to consume their numbers; and that the time of the intermingling of the races to any great extent is still remote.

Though there is much in these views to excite the regrets of a man of pure philanthropy, it appears to me that the cause of emancipation is far from being as bad as it is generally supposed to be in Europe.

Impatience is a characteristic of zeal. But impatience, though creditable to the feelings of the European, sometimes leads him, on this subject, into assertions that might provoke comparisons which would not be so honourable to his own society, perhaps, as he is apt to fancy. Impatience, however, on the part of the American, may even do worse; it may retard the very consummation he wishes. Mildness, candour, and conciliation, are his weapons; and I think they will be irresistible. Although an ardent wisher of the happy moment of general emancipation, I always turn with disgust from those cold and heartless paragraphs which occasionally appear in the northern journals of this country, and which, under a superficial pretension to humanity, trifle with the safety and happiness of two of their fellow-citizens, in order to give an affected aid to the undoubtedly righteous cause of one black man. If this species of irritating language did good, if it did no harm by hardening men in their opinions, it would be disagreeable; but under the actual state of things, it is far worse than useless. The general tone of the press, however, is sufficiently amicable; and all those who understand the difference between argumentation and judgment, have reason to hope it may long continue so.

But physical suffering, especially in a country like this, is not the prominent grievance of slavery. It is the deep moral degradation, which no man has a right to entail on another, that forms the essence of its shame. God has planted in all our spirits secret but lasting aspirations after a state of existence, higher than that which we enjoy, and no one has a right to say that such are the limits beyond which your reason, and, consequently, your mental being, shall not pass. That men, equally degraded, exist under systems that do not openly avow the principle

of domestic slavery, is no excuse for the perpetuation of such a scourge, though circumstances and necessity may urge a great deal in extenuation of its present existence.

TO SIR EDWARD WALLER, BART.

&c. &c.

New-York, ———

THE next subject of interest, after the unfortunate descendants of the Africans, that has been brought into my notice by this southern tour, is the remnant of the original possessors of these regions. By far the most numerous, and the most important of the native tribes, which still continue in the immediate vicinity of the whites, are those which occupy reservations in Georgia, the Floridas, Alabama, Mississippi, and Tennessee. The lingering fragments of a hundred tribes are certainly seen scattered over the immense surface of this country, living on greater or less tracts that had been secured to them, or dwelling by sufferance in the woods; but the only people now residing east of the Mississippi who can aspire to the names of nations, are the Creeks, the Choctaws, the Chickasaws, the Cherokees, and the Seminoles, all of whom dwell in the portion of country I have named.

As a rule, the red man disappears before the superior moral and physical influence of the white, just as I believe the black man will eventually do the same thing, unless he shall seek shelter in some other region. In nine cases in ten, the tribes have gradually removed west; and there is now a confused as-

semblage of nations and languages collected on the immense hunting grounds of the Prairies.

It is impossible to say any thing of the numbers of the Indians, except by conjecture, since they are not considered as coming properly within the computations of the censuses. Perhaps the five nations named may contain not far from twenty thousand souls. It is not probable that all the Indians that live within the boundaries of the United States, stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific, materially exceed 120,000, if indeed they reach that amount. Still I do not pretend to any great accuracy in my estimates. Their numbers, in this quarter of America, have always been exaggerated; and the sounding terms of nations and tribes have contributed to the extension of a mistaken idea of their importance.

The ordinary manner of the disappearance of the Indian, is by a removal deeper into the forest. Still, many linger near the graves of their fathers, to which their superstitions, no less than a fine natural feeling, lend a deeper interest. The fate of the latter is inevitable; they become victims to the abuses of civilization, without ever attaining to any of its moral elevation.

As might be supposed, numberless divisions of these people, when the country was discovered, were found in possession of districts along the coast, and deriving a principal means of support from the ocean. They were fishermen rather than hunters, though the savage state ordinarily infers a resort to both pursuits. Most of these people, too, retired reluctantly from a view of "the great salt lake," but some were environed by the whites before they were properly aware of the blighting influence of the communion; and, getting gradually accustomed to their presence, they preferred remaining near the places where they had first drawn breath. Trifling districts of territory have been, in every instance in which they were sufficient-

ly numerous to make such a provision desirable, secured to them, and on these little tracts of land many of them still remain. I have visited one or two of their establishments.

In point of civilization, comforts, and character, the Indians, who remain near the coasts, are about on a level with the lowest classes of European peasantry. Perhaps they are somewhat below the English, but I think not below the Irish peasants. They are much below the condition of the mass of the slaves. It is but another proof of the wayward vanity of man, that the latter always hold the Indians in contempt, though it is some proof that they feel their own condition to be physically better: morally, in one sense, it certainly is not.

Many of these Atlantic Indians go to sea. They are quite often found in the whalers, and, in some instances, in the vessels of war. An officer in the navy has told me that he once knew a Montauk Indian who was a captain of the main-top in a sloop of war; and in another instance, a flag officer had his gig manned by Indians. They make active and very obedient seamen, but are never remarkable for strength. The whole number of them who now go to sea, does not, however, probably exceed a hundred or two.*

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*The writer, while in America, heard an anecdote which may give some idea of the notions of retributive justice which linger so long in the philosophy of an Indian, and which is, probably, the basis of his desire for revenge, since he is well known to be as eminently grateful as he is vindictive. The whalers always take their reward in a portion of the profits of the voyage. An Indian made several voyages in succession, in the same ship; he found, at his return, that bad luck, advances, and the supplies of an extravagant family at home, left him always in debt. "What shall I do?" was the question put to his owner, as each unfortunate balance was exhibited. "You must go to sea." To sea he went, and, as stated, for four or five years, always with the same result. At length, good fortune, with a proper amount of preventive castigation on his im-

I accompanied Cadwallader on a visit to a connexion, who lives within forty miles of New-York, on the adjacent island of Nassau (Long Island.) The uncle of my friend was a man of an extensive hereditary estate, on which there might have been a reservation of a few thousand acres of woods. While shooting over this forest, one day, the proprietor asked me if I felt any desire to see an Indian king. Surprised at such a question, in such a place, an explanation was requested. He told me that an Indian, who claimed to be a descendant of the ancient Sachems, then held his court in his woods, and that a walk of fifteen minutes would bring us into the presence of King Peter. We went.

I found this Indian, dwelling with his family, in a wigwam of a most primitive construction. It was in the form of a bee-hive, or rather of a very high dome. The covering was made of a long, tough grass, that grows near the sea, and the texture was fine and even beautiful. A post in the centre supported the fabric, which was shaped by delicate curving poles. A hole in the top admitted the light, and allowed the smoke to pass out; and the fire was near enough to the upright post to permit a kettle to be suspended from one of its knots (or cut branches) near enough to feel the influence of the heat. The door was a covering of mats, and the furniture consisted of a few rude chairs, baskets, and a bed, that was neither savage, nor yet such as marks the civilized man. The attire of the family was partly that of the one condition, and partly that of the other. The man himself was a full-blooded Indian, but his manner had that species

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provident wife, before he sailed, brought the balance on his side. The money was of course tendered; but for a long time he refused to receive it, insisting that justice required that his owners should now go to sea, where it would seem he had not enjoyed himself quite as much as he believed the other party to the contract had done on shore.

of sullen deportment that betrays the disposition without the boldness of the savage. He complained that "basket stuff" was getting scarce, and spoke of an intention of removing his wigwam shortly to some other estate.

The manufacture of baskets and brooms is a common employment of all the Indians who reside near the settlements. They feed on game, and, sometimes, like the gypsies, they make free with poultry, though in common they are rigidly honest; nearly always so, unless corrupted by much intercourse with the whites. With the proceeds of their labour they purchase blankets, powder, and such other indulgences as exceed their art to manufacture. King Peter, I was told, claimed a right, in virtue of his royal descent, to cut saplings to supply his materials, on any estate in the island. He was permitted to enjoy this species of feudal privilege in quiet, it being well understood that he was not to exceed a certain discretion in its exercise.

In the more interior parts of the country, I frequently met families of the Indians, either travelling, or proceeding to some village, with their wares. They were all alike, a stunted, dirty, and degraded race. Sometimes they encamped in the forests, lighted their fires, and remained for weeks in a place; and at others, they kept roaming daily, until the time arrived when they should return to their reservations.

The reservations in the old States, and with tribes that cannot aspire to the dignity of nations, are managed on a sufficiently humane principle. The laws of the State, or of the United States, have jurisdiction there, in all matters between white men, or between a white man and an Indian; but the Indians themselves are commonly permitted to control the whole of their own internal policy. Bargains, exceeding certain amounts, are not valid between them and the whites, who cannot, for instance, purchase

their lands. Schools are usually provided, in the more important tribes, by the general government, and in the less, by charity. Religious instruction is also furnished by the latter means.

I saw reservations in which no mean advances had been made in civilization. Farms were imperfectly tilled, and cattle were seen grazing in the fields. Still, civilization advances slowly among a people who consider labour a degradation, in addition to the bodily dislike that all men have to its occupations.

There are many of these tribes, however, who fill a far more important, and altogether a remarkable position. There is certainly no portion of country within the admitted boundaries of the United States, in which their laws are not paramount, if they choose to exert them. Still, savage communities do exist within these limits, with whom they make treaties, against whom they wage open war, and with whom they make solemn peace. As a treaty is, by the constitution, the paramount law of the land, the several States are obliged to respect their legal provisions.

That neither the United States, nor any individual State, has ever taken possession of any land that, by usage or construction, might be decreed the property of the Indians, without a treaty and a purchase, is, I believe, certain. How far an equivalent is given, is another question: though I fancy that these bargains are quite as just as any that are ever driven between the weak and the strong, the intelligent and the ignorant. It is not pretended that the value of the territory gained is paid for; but the purchase is rather a deference to general principles of justice and humanity, than a concession to a right in the Indians, which itself might admit of a thousand legal quibbles. The treaties are sufficiently humane, and, although certain borderers, who possess the power of the white man with the disposition of the savage, do sometimes violate their conditions, there is no just

reason to distrust the intentions or the conduct of the government. But you may desire to know something of the detail of the intercourse.

You have seen that the expenses of the war department of this government, for the year 1826, was 6,243,236 dollars. Among other charges, I find the following items included in the gross amount. The sums are all in dollars. Civilization of Indians, 14,914; pay of Indian agents, 29,860; sub-ditto, 12,131; presents to Indians, 16,387; contingencies of Indian department, 130,542; general councils with Indians on Lake Superior, 270,000; relief of the Florida Indians, 7,249; treaties with ditto, 3,218; Creek treaties, 109,471; Choctaw treaty, 2,056; Choctaw schools, 2,804; treaties with Choctaws and Chickasaws, 15,000; other Indian treaties, 183,568; annuities to Indians, 243,542, &c. &c.

The annuities are sums paid for grants of land. At the treaties, presents are always made to the tribes, and the agents and sub-agents are men employed to maintain the influence of the government, and at the same time, to see that the rights of the Indians are respected.

There is a bureau of the war department that is called the "office of the Indian affairs." A humane and discreet individual is at its head, and a good deal is endeavoured to be done in mitigating the sufferings and in meliorating the condition of the Indians, though, owing to the peculiar habits and opinions of these people, but little, I fear, is effected. I see by the report of the current year, (1827) that, in nine months, requisitions towards the support of the objects of this bureau, were made to the amount of 759,116 dollars, or at the rate of a little more than a million of dollars a year. This, you will remember, is one-tenth of the current expenditure of the whole government, and nearly as much as is paid for the support of the whole civil list, strictly speaking.

The manner in which the money is appropriated, can be seen in the extracts already quoted for the year 1826.

The government, it would appear by the reports, puts the utmost latitude on the construction of their constitutional powers, by even paying money for the support of missionaries among the Indians. I believe, however, that the alleged and legal object of this charge, is for general instruction, though in point of fact, the teachers are missionaries. They are of all sects, Protestant and Catholic, the question of creed being never discussed at all. I see by the reports, that (in 1827) there were 1291 scholars in the different schools that come under the superintendence of the government. It is not probable that all the Indians belonging to the tribes that receive this instruction, much exceed, if indeed they reach, the total number of 30,000. I think it is therefore apparent, that quite as good provision for elementary instruction is made in behalf of the Indians, as is commonly made for the people of any country, except those of the United States themselves. There is no reason to suppose that all the children who present themselves, are not taught; and there is much reason for believing that efforts are constantly making to induce all to come. The number of teachers is 293, which is quite enough to instruct ten times the number. You are not to suppose, however, that all these teachers are men hired expressly for that purpose. They are the missionaries, their wives and families, and some of them are for the purpose of instructing in the arts of life, as well as in reading and writing. Much of the expense is defrayed by charitable associations. The sum actually paid by the government for the express object of instruction, is 7,150 dollars, or enough to maintain rather more than forty teachers at stipends of 150 dollars each. It is probable that

some receive more, and some less. It is said that the schools are generally in a flourishing condition.

Where there is much intercourse between the very strong and very weak, there is always a tendency in the human mind to suspect abuses of power. I shall not descend into the secret impulses that give rise to these suspicions: but in this stage of the world, there is no necessity for suspecting a nation like this of any unprovoked wrongs against a people like the savages. The inroad of the whites of the United States has never been marked by the gross injustice and brutality that have distinguished similar inroads elsewhere. The Indians have never been slain except in battle, unless by lawless individuals; never hunted by blood-hounds, or in any manner aggrieved, except in the general, and, perhaps, in some degree, justifiable invasion of a territory that they did not want, nor could not use. If the government of the United States was poor and necessitous, one might suspect it of an unjust propensity; but not only the facts, but the premises, would teach us to believe the reverse.

A great, humane, and, I think, rational project, is now in operation to bring the Indians within the pale of civilization. I shall furnish you with its outline as it is detailed in a recent report of the head of the Indian office.

Most, if not all of the Indians who reside east of the Mississippi, live within the jurisdiction of some State or of some territory. In most cases they are left to the quiet enjoyment of the scanty rights which they retain; but the people of their vicinity commonly wish to get rid of neighbours that retard civilization, and who are so often troublesome. The policy of States is sometimes adverse to their continuance. Though there is no power, except that of the United States, which can effect their removal without their own consent, the State authorities can

greatly embarrass the control of the general government. A question of policy, and, perhaps, of jurisdiction, lately arose on this subject between Georgia and the general government. In the course of its disposal, the United States, in order to secure the rights of the Indians more effectually, and to prevent any future question of this sort, appear to have hit on the following plan.

West of the Mississippi they still hold large regions that belong to no State or territory. They propose to several tribes (Choctaws, Chickasaws, Cherokees, &c.) to sell their present possessions, improvements, houses, fences, stock, &c., and to receive, in return, acre for acre, with the same amount of stock, fences, and every other auxiliary of civilization they now possess. The inducements to make this exchange are as follow:—Perpetuity to their establishments, since a pledge is given that no title shall ever be granted that may raise a pretext for another removal; an organization of a republican, or, as it is termed, a territorial government for them, such as now exist in Florida, Arkansas, and Michigan; protection, by the presence of troops; and a right to send delegates to Congress, similar to that now enjoyed by the other territories.

If the plan can be effected, there is reason to think that the constant diminution in the numbers of the Indians will be checked, and that a race, about whom there is so much that is poetic and fine in recollection, will be preserved. Indeed, some of the southern tribes have already endured the collision with the white man, and are still slowly on the increase. As one of these tribes, at least, (the Chickasaws,) is included in this plan, there is just ground to hope that the dangerous point of communication has been passed, and that they may continue to advance in civilization to maturity. The chief of the bureau on Indian affairs gives it as his opinion that they (the

Chickasaws) have increased about ten per cent. within six years. Their whole number is computed at four thousand souls.

Should such a territory be formed, a nucleus will be created, around which all the savages of the west, who have any yearnings for a more meliorated state of existence, can rally. As there is little reluctance to mingle the white and red blood, (for the physical difference is far less than in the case of the blacks, and the Indians have never been menial slaves,) I think an amalgamation of the two races would in time occur. Those families of America who are thought to have any of the Indian blood, are rather proud of their descent, and it is a matter of boast among many of the most considerable persons of Virginia, that they are descended from the renowned Pocahontas.

The character of the American Indian has been too often faithfully described to need any repetition here. The majority of them, in or near the settlements, are an humbled and much degraded race. As you recede from the Mississippi, the finer traits of savage life become visible; and, although most of the natives of the Prairies, even there, are far from being the interesting and romantic heroes that poets love to paint, there are specimens of loftiness of spirit, of bearing, and of savage heroism, to be found among the chiefs, that might embarrass the fertility of the richest invention to equal. I met one of those heroes of the desert, and a finer physical and moral man, allowing for peculiarity of condition, it has rarely been my good fortune to encounter.

Peterlasharroo, or the young knife chief of the Pawnees, when I saw him, was a man of some six or seven-and-twenty years. He had already gained renown as a warrior, and he had won the confidence of his tribe by repeated exhibitions of wisdom and moderation. He had been signally useful in destroy-

ing a baneful superstition, which would have made a sacrifice of a female prisoner, whose life he saved by admirable energy, and a fearless exposure of his own. The reputation of even this remote and savage hero had spread beyond the narrow limits of his own country; and, when we met, I was prepared to yield him esteem and admiration. But the impression produced by his grave and haughty, though still courteous mien, the restless, but often steady, and bold glance of his dark, keen eye, and the quiet dignity of his air, are still present to my recollection. With a view to propitiate so powerful a chief, I had prepared a present of peacock's feathers, which were so arranged as to produce as much effect as the fine plumage of that noble bird will allow. He received my offering with a quiet smile, and regarded the boon with a complacency that seemed to find more of its motive in a wish to be grateful, than in any selfish gratification. The gift was then laid aside, nor was it regarded again, during the whole of a long and interesting interview. You may judge of my surprise, when I afterwards learned that this simple child of the plains considered my gift in some such light as a courtier would esteem a brilliant. The interpreter assured me that I had made him able to purchase thirty horses, a species of property that constitutes the chief wealth of his tribe. But, notwithstanding my unintentional liberality, no sign of pleasure, beyond that which I have related, was suffered to escape him, in the presence of a white man.

TO SIR EDWARD WALLER, BART.

&c. &c.

Washington, ———

You can scarcely expect a very minute description of what I have seen in my southern tour. Still I may put a few general facts before your eyes, in a new, and, perhaps, not uninteresting manner.

The eleven slave-holding States of this confederation contain about 489,000 square miles of territory. If Arkansas and the Floridas (not yet States) shall be included, they will swell the amount to about 600,000, or something less than double the extent of the whole thirteen northern, or free States, including Michigan, which, together, cover a surface of 334,000 square miles. Thus, you see, that about one-half of the whole computed territory of the United States is so far settled, as to have arrived at the point of establishing the State or territorial governments. But there is no probability that any other community will be speedily formed, on this side of the Rocky Mountains, of sufficient importance to aspire to the possession of a separate government. The Prairies, and the deserts of the west, present natural obstacles to the further progress of the population in that quarter; and climate opposes a serious reason to the comfortable existence of man towards the north-west. That all these regions will, in time, come to have a population of their own, is certain; but, in a country where there is still so much room for the employment of men, that day is necessarily distant.

I have estimated the whole white population, who are now in possession of these 600,000 square miles, at 3,500,000, and the blacks at less than 1,900,000,

of which number, as you know, I think something like 1,750,000 may be slaves. The free blacks in the *free* States, in 1820, amounted to 112,231; 10 or 12,000 have been manumitted since, by the operation of the laws. The estimate of the whole number of blacks in the United States, must materially exceed 2,000,000, or I have given quite enough to the southern States. Supposing these estimates to be near the truth, (it is impossible that they should be exact,) the whole of the 600,000 square miles are occupied by 5,400,000 souls, exclusive of Indians; or at the rate of nine inhabitants to the square mile. But the remark which I have made concerning the districts of country, entirely uninhabited, to the north, is also applicable to similar regions to the south. There are also fewer villages to the south than to the north. The same is true with respect to towns of all sizes. Baltimore, the largest city in the slave-holding States, contains, perhaps, about half as many inhabitants as Philadelphia; and New-Orleans, and Charleston, and Richmond, the only other three towns of any magnitude, are not, all together, as large as Boston. After the places just named, there is no town that reaches 10,000 inhabitants, and few that come up to half that number. There are, however, one or two new thriving places on the bays of the Gulf of Mexico, where cities will probably be formed, though, I think, there is scarcely a town now in existence, except Baltimore, New-Orleans, Charleston, and Richmond, in the whole of this immense region, that contains 10,000 souls.

In forming an idea of the appearance of a country thus inhabited, in addition to the general fact of districts that are entirely untenanted, you are to call into view the peculiar division of property which occurs on nearly all the coast. Extensive plantations, on which none but the best land is worked, make fearful interruptions in the agricultural character of

the country: and the vast pine barrens that occur along the Atlantic, and even on the Gulf, leave wide spaces of unoccupied ground, even in the longest settled parts of these States.

But there are States, or parts of States, that present a very different picture. Some of the counties of Maryland and Virginia are in a high degree beautiful; and the uplands of the Carolinas and Georgia are of an entirely different character from the coasts. Tennessee has not only a fine climate and a fertile soil, but a population that, in common, might vie with the population of any country for all the best attributes of man.

You will see that the great physical force of this nation, however, lies in the more northern States. If we except Kentucky, Tennessee, and the uplands generally, I think this must long continue to be the fact. The arts of life are more cultivated there than to the south; and as they get still more into use, men will cling to their indulgence with all the tenacity of acquired habits. Emigration to the south-western States has been chiefly fed by Virginia, Georgia, and the two Carolinas. These four States contained, in 1790, 1,463,982, and in 1820, 2,535,493. Emigration to the new northern States has been chiefly fed by New-England. In 1790, New-England had 1,009,522 souls; and in 1820, 1,659,864. Here you see that the rate of increase is rather in favour of the latter; but if we look into the increase of the States that have been fed by this emigration, it will be found to be still more in favour of the northern portion of the country. In 1790, all the free States had 2,033,248 inhabitants, and in 1820, 5,225,117. In 1790, all the slave-holding States contained 1,890,080 souls; and in 1820, 4,400,617. Here you see that, notwithstanding the vast superiority of the southern States over the northern in extent, the increase of population in the latter is in a ratio considerably in their favour.

In 1790, the slave-holding States had 137,168 fewer inhabitants than their northern sisters; whereas, in 1820, the northern States had 824,500 the most. After allowing for the difference of *capital*, the excess is nearly 400,000 too many for the regular proportion of the increase. It is also known that many adventurers go from the northern States into the southern, while comparatively few southern men come north, though it is certainly done. If we take 6,500,000 as the present population of the northern States, (and I believe it is within bounds,) there will remain 5,500,000 for the southern. This will show again that the southern States are beginning to maintain their own; but their present growth is more owing to the vast regions of fertile land that have lately been opened for sale at the south, than to natural increase, since every man who emigrates counts two in the amount of comparative numbers.

The inducements that carry the northern man far south, must be exceedingly strong to overcome the effects of climate, and the repugnance he is apt to feel to slavery. Still these inducements do exist, and in some parts of the country the climate itself is among the reasons for emigration. It is the coast, chiefly, which is unhealthy; and even on the coast, there are found many delightful and salubrious situations, where northern men gladly resort for the purposes of trade. It is quite natural that the northern population, having occupied most of their own best lands, should begin to find their way into the southern, and particularly into the south-western States.

There is a considerable difference of character between the people of the northern, and between some of the people of the southern States of this Union. I do not allude to the distinctive traits which form the habits of a border man, and a man of the towns; for these exist between the frontier inhabitant of New-York and the inhabitant of the city of that

name. But slavery itself, and the dispersed establishments of the whites, which are a consequence of slavery, have a direct effect on the manners of the southern inhabitants.

The owner of slaves, whatever may be his correlative standing with men of his own colour, is a species of aristocrat, so far as manners are concerned. He is kept, in his own person, from the pursuits and employments that are commonly thought to degrade men, and of course he acquires the opinions of a superior caste. Where opportunity of sufficient association is allowed, he gets the habits, also, of this caste. I am of opinion, that in proportion to the population, there are more men who belong to what is termed the class of gentlemen, in the old southern States of America than in any other country of the world. So far as pride in themselves, a courteous air, and a general intelligence, are concerned, they are, perhaps, quite on a level with the gentry of any other country, though their intelligence must necessarily be chiefly of that sort which is obtained by the use of books, rather than of extensive familiarity with the world. In respect to conventional manners, they are not so generally finished as the upper classes of other countries, or even of some classes in their own; though I do not know where to find gentlemen of better air or better breeding throughout, than most of those I have met in the southern *Atlantic* States.

The American who has had the advantage of early association with men of breeding, and who possesses the advantages of fortune and education, occupies a station in society that the gentleman, or nobleman, of no country of different political institutions can ever fill. He sees, and knows that he exists without a superior. He has wealth, and manner, and education, and beyond this, neither he nor any of his countrymen can go. No man can, in truth, go beyond them any where; though artificial distinctions may have the

effect to reduce men *below* the consideration that these advantages should produce. So long as society shall be governed by its ordinary and natural feelings, it is not possible to deprive money, intelligence, and manners, of their influence; but it is quite possible to give an artificial importance to other causes of distinction, to which society must bend by its own ordinances. It is true, that in some countries, actual power is connected with nominal rank; but it is just as true, that actual power is to be attained in America, though by different means. Thus, the English gentleman may become a peer, and the American gentleman may become a Senator; and, although the former is certain of transmitting his rank to his posterity, still it is a rank which, while it has many inferiors, has some superiors. The American who sees himself in possession of the three great requisites of an elevated condition, meets the President as an equal, who is intrusted for a time, with honourable powers, but who merely fills a station that he himself may one day occupy,

It is the fashion of Europe to talk a great deal of the levelling institutions of the United States. I have elsewhere said, that elevating would be a better word. It is difficult to conceive how institutions that admit of the strongest temptations for every man to aspire, can have the effect of placing a nation below the level of other communities. All rational theory, and what is of far more importance, the facts, prove exactly the reverse. I would defy any nation on earth to produce as many men (and women too) as the United States, allowing for their opportunities and their numbers, who have reached a creditable moral elevation of character. I include manners, no less than principles, intelligence, and other requisites. That this class will increase, both in quality and quantity, as the population becomes more dense, is,

I think, unavoidable; and then we shall have a new face put upon certain ancient theories.

Let us suppose these States inhabited by one hundred millions of people. It is, for our present purpose, a matter of indifference whether they shall live under one government, or under twenty. Their men of fortune, breeding, and education, have reached the acme of human elevation, (of course no allusion is intended to religion,) for a patent of nobility does nothing towards raising the qualifications of its possessor, however it may serve to depress his inferiors. We will suppose some four or five millions of these men acknowledging, and actually possessing no earthly superior, in full communion with the rest of the world. What do you think will be their effect on the condition of society? They will claim to be equal to ranks that are admitted to be superior to the immense majorities of other nations. Nor do I see how their claim is well to be denied. They will be quite equal in manners, in wealth, in general elevation of character, (even admitting that they shall be subdivided again and again as States in political power,) and they will insist on being equal, in society, to the highest ranks of other countries. Now, my dear Somersetshire baronet, what are we to do in order to maintain our present unquestionable superiority over these gentry, who are contriving to get above us by their levelling institutions. We cannot pistol them down, for, unhappily, a democrat can shoot as well as an aristocrat, and in point of numbers, they will be ten to one; we cannot laugh them down, for the joke will be on their side; we cannot look them down, for they will have a full share of the substantials, and by present symptoms, I think they will have more; nor can we send them to Coventry, for, independently of getting so many motley nations as Europe contains, to be exactly of one mind, they will care less about the association than we.

I have been led into this train of reflections, by studying the character of the better classes of these people, more especially as I have found them in the southern States. Their conventional manners vary, of course, according to circumstances; but that high and manly principle of fearless independence, which is almost peculiar to this country, forms a conspicuous feature in their characters. I very well know, that where manners are wanting, this bold quality may make men exacting and coarse; but where manners do prevail, and, considering the circumstances, they prevail here to an extraordinary degree, it makes men truly noble.

Slavery is not favourable to the milder qualities in the master. It may polish, but it never subdues his manner. But he who governs many human beings, without having much intercourse with his equals, is apt to acquire habits of impatience and self-will. That these qualities exist in a much greater degree in the southern than in the northern States of America, is, I believe, undeniable; though I do not think they exist to the degree that the theory would lead us to suppose.

The accounts of the violence and vindictive tempers of the people of the southern States of America are, I am quite satisfied, grossly exaggerated, not only in Europe, but in America itself. It is commonly sufficient that rare exceptions of any thing extraordinary should occur, any where, to give circulation to reports that such things are distinctive of national character. I recollect to have seen a caricature, in the Palais Royal, of an Englishman leading his wife to be sold with a halter round her neck; and I make no doubt, that to thousands of the spectators it conveyed an idea of a common national usage, if not of a law. When I descended the Ohio and the Mississippi, it was not done without some terror for my eyes; but I cannot say that I saw any body gouged

during the whole journey. Sundry marvellous tales were told me; but, like all other marvellous exploits, they would not endure examination. Such things must have occurred, or the rumour would not have been raised; but, if it were ever common, the practice is certainly getting into disuse. That rude and violent men should have navigated these endless rivers when their banks were nearly untenanted, is quite probable; but the manners of the boatmen now are about as good as those of boatmen in Europe; in many things, they are much better.

I have elsewhere alluded to the duels of America, and as they may properly be introduced here, we will endeavour to discuss the subject. Personal combats are, beyond a doubt, the relics of an age when man had the desires of high civilization, without any other means of attaining them than by appeals to force. The principle on which they are grounded, says, that a man is willing to prove that he cares less for his life than he does for his reputation. I fear, too, that more or less of a desire to punish aggression, or of personal feelings, are mingled with the sentiment; but as it is a chivalrous subject, we will give it its most chivalrous construction. In the eastern States of America, in New-York, (the city of that name excepted,) and in parts of Ohio and Pennsylvania, duels are less frequent than, perhaps, in any other civilized country, especially in a country where men have as high a respect for themselves as they have in this. My friend, who has known the more western counties of New-York intimately for thirty years, assures me that he does not recollect but one duel in all that time, and that was fought full five-and-twenty years ago. He does not pretend that this combat stands alone; bnt he thinks that he should have heard of them had there been many more. He also excepts those meetings which took place between officers while the troops and seamen were

serving within the districts named. A duel in New-England is exceedingly rare. He accounts for this fact on his favourite principle of common sense. Religious education may do a great deal, but then common sense has something to do with religion. There are many instances in which English clergymen have been engaged in duels: and I fancy that it is not an uncommon circumstance for men who are in full communion with their respective churches, in Europe, to meet in private combats. Such a thing could scarcely occur in the United States, the reason of the people being much too exacting to allow of so broad a contradiction between profession and practice. Cadwallader thinks, and my own observation confirms his opinion, there is a greater proportion of men (in high situations of life too) in the United States, who dare, and who would, refuse, and who have refused to fight duels, on the ground of the absurdity of the practice, than in any other nation he has visited. I must say that this is the only people among whom I have found gentleman-like men who have openly laughed at the gross folly of the usage, and who, it was understood, considered themselves as too rational to be guilty of so great an act of folly. It must be admitted that common sense has done all it can do with these individuals.

Next to this class, which is very numerous in the portions of country named, come those who live in the great towns, and all the rest of the middle States. Duelling is about as common in this portion of the country, as it is in France or in England. Perhaps the older parts of Virginia and the two Carolinas may be included in this division; though, as it is thought, and I believe justly, that men in warm climates have quicker and more sensitive passions than men in colder, it is possible they may be rather more frequent.

The whole of the remainder of the Union may be

included, with certain exceptions, in another division, in which duels are probably, considering the amount of the white population, as at least four to one, compared with Europe, or even in a higher rate of disproportion.

It is necessary, however, to bear in mind one circumstance which has had a great influence in obtaining a character for the Americans, not only as duellists, but as a semi-barbarous people, in Europe. Nothing occurs the least out of the ordinary course of events, and in which the law is offended, that does not go the rounds of their thousand journals. It is also fair to suppose that the ingenuity of an editor on a remote frontier is often at a loss to give interest to his sheet, and that when an opportunity does occur, he suffers none of the more interesting, which is always the exciting, portion of the incidents to be kept in shadow.

A century ago, men met in detachments of five and six on a side, to settle some trifling point of honour between two. After this, it was thought that every man might purge himself of disgrace in his own person. Swords were used, until common sense began to teach men that it was folly to pre-suppose the same degree of strength and personal activity and skill in any two men. Then came pistols. For a long time (the practice still exists in some places) the injured party was to call out the offender, and to stand up and be shot at, before he could with propriety get a chance to redress his wrongs. This practice can surely only be accounted for by supposing that the object of the challenger was to purge himself of disgrace by risking his life.

As I understand the matter, the rough, steady, unaccommodating fashion, which the Americans have of viewing things, had long induced them to chafe under these equivocal practices. Common sense did its work thoroughly on a great proportion of the na-

tion, who said plainly, we shall not do so ridiculous a thing as to let a man shoot at us because he has done us a wrong; and as for revenge, we think it nobler to forgive. But common sense did not go so far with, perhaps, a moderate majority. They continued to fight in the European fashion. About five-and-twenty years ago, there was a great intellectual crisis in this nation. They began to cut up certain antiquated opinions, freely, and to talk with more boldness than before, of all things connected with government, morals, and customs. When two men went into the field and both returned unharmed, the non-combatants were apt to ask, with a sneer, for what did you go there? This sort of language, which was used openly, and with something of the air of contempt, compelled the combatants to give some proof that they had been in a little jeopardy, and, in short, it set common sense at work on their side of the question. They were not sufficiently under its influence to join the non-combatants, but they had too much directness of thought not to make the practice consistent with itself. When they looked at their pistols, which were fixed with hair-triggers, and which bore a most bloody aspect, and which, by the bye, underwent all these preparations in Europe, whence they were imported, they were induced to inquire into the object of so much arrangement. The result was, that in addition to the absurdity of fighting at all, they had incurred the absurdity of fighting with so little danger, as to make the practice doubly ridiculous in the eyes of those who determined to look at the naked truth. So they began to take aim, and to practise, and to get skill, until they reached the present honourable standard.

This system of stripping a thing, that is foolish in itself, of all its inconsistent folly, has brought the custom under a certain set of rules. The true object of every duel is, or it ought to be, to exhibit courage,

A shall not injure B without incurring a certain risk; and he shall, at least, be driven to prove that he has spirit to meet that risk. It is true, that the world admits a degree of vengeance into the custom, since it says, that certain offences require two shots, and certain others may be expiated by one. But I think, on the whole, that even this extraordinary bloody-mindedness takes the aspect of an additional purgation to the man who has received the wrong. That courage which is willing to endure the pain of a wound, but which shrinks from the danger of death, say the American duellists, (in their practice) is, like the courage of a boxer, of a very inferior quality. They, therefore, deal in that which is thought to be superior.

It is quite plain that fighting is a serious thing, and serious things become a little absurd, unless done in a serious manner. But it is plain, that there must be a medium in the serious character of a duel, or men might put the pistols into each other's mouths at once, and then absurdity on the other side, would be gained, and a practice, that is sufficiently foolish in itself, is obliged to get as near the true medium as possible, or it could not exist in a common sense nation. This little prelude brings us to the field of battle.

The American brings on the ground, just as much skill with the weapon he is to use, as he can; which, you will see, is just what the swordsman did, or the great masters of the art, the ancient chivalry of Europe. When confronted to his antagonist, he finds himself thrown on the severest possible trial of his steadiness and nerves, or on the very quality whose prepossession he came thus to prove. He knows that his life is the penalty of a blunder, just as a false guard would have been fatal with the other weapon. The result is, certainly, that, perhaps, in every two or three duels, one man falls, and, in almost all, somebody is hurt. The usual forms are much as they are

in Europe. As, however, skill is deemed not only fair, but necessary, when there is reason to suspect that either party is inferior to the other in the use of the weapon, his second takes care to propose some alteration in the distance, which destroys skill, and throws the combatants more completely on their nerves. In some few instances, rifles and muskets have been used, to produce this equality, especially among border men, who have been most used to these weapons. This, is, clearly, no more than another change like that from the lance and the casque to the small-sword, and from the small-sword to the pistol. And still, so completely do we get to be the slaves of custom, that we shudder at hearing of a duel with a rifle, while we think nothing of a duel with a pistol! Surely the change from the small-sword to the pistol, was greater than the change from the pistol to the rifle. For my own part, I wish they would introduce artillery; for I feel perfectly convinced, that so long as men can maintain a reputation for spirit, at a rate so cheap as one life in ten or twelve duels, the barbarous custom will continue. It will go out of use in something like an explosion of a magazine. It is a pity that the friends of humanity had not hit on some less suspicious plan of furthering their views, than one so very equivocal as that which teaches us to believe, that this sort of honour can be maintained at the least possible danger.

With respect to the causes of the frequency of the American duels, a great deal can be said. The military and naval men have fought more duels than they would otherwise have done, on account of their long peace. Swords get impatient of quiet, and courage is a quality so vital to a soldier, that he is often uneasy until he has had an opportunity of proving its existence. They are said to be much less frequent now than formerly; especially, when the increased number of the officers is remembered.

Duels of mere manners are, if any thing, (out of the two services,) less common here than in Europe. The Doctors' Commons heals no breaches in the United States. The offence is rare, but the pistol is always the proctor. I am inclined to think that the political institutions of the nation, by bringing men of different breeding and education, more in contact than they are found in other countries, give rise to many duels.

The frequent recurrence of the elections, while they render the polls more quiet than they would be under any other system, produce a greater proportion of grave political quarrels than elections do, for instance, in England. Then the dispersed. secluded situation of the planters, in the southern States, has a tendency to foster morbid sensibility, while their habits bring them, frequently, into a species of irritating association.

The laws of England, and of most of the States of this country, are the same on the subject of duels. To kill a man in any violent rencontre, which can be readily avoided, is, by the common law, murder. Nor is it a legal plea, that mere honour was a sufficiently compulsory motive. Now, the same common sense and directness of thought, which, in some cases, makes the American refuse to fight at all, and induces him, in others, to fight in a reasonably dangerous manner, produces another difference in the practices of the mother and child, on this subject. In England, when a man is killed in a duel, the survivor is tried, and all things being found fair, he is acquitted according to opinion, and not according to law; whereas, in America, the direct and unaccommodating way these people have of considering matters, precludes such a result. The law is the same as in England, but their construction on it would be different. A man, who had killed another in a duel, would, most probably, be sentenced to be hanged

and the conventional opinion of society is, therefore, exhibited in not trying him at all. There is an occasional struggle between the combatants and the non-combatants to bring some particular case before a jury; but the former are always too wise to incur the risk; they therefore get out of the way. You may see, in this very fact, a striking difference in the manner in which thought is exercised in the two nations.

The people of this country have fought many duels with the English, while they scarcely ever fight with any other foreigners. This was, perhaps, for many reasons, to be expected. Their wars were irritating; their policy has often been conflicting; and the citizen of the young nation may have often been too sensitive, and the subject of the old nation may sometimes have been too exacting. I know no more of the matter than that the people of both nations think that their own countrymen have been right in these quarrels, and the foreigners wrong; which is only another proof that there is no great reason in any thing that appertains to the practice.

No hospitality, kindness, or courtesy, can exceed that of most of the planters of the southern States of this confederation. It was a practice, long in use, for a stranger to drive up to the door of a dwelling, of any pretension, and to ask food and lodging for the night. The custom is not entirely neglected, even now, though increased travelling, and the greater frequency of inns, have conspired to put a stop to it. This freedom of intercourse is, clearly, no more than a natural consequence of simplicity of manners, and of absence of suspicion. It is even practised in the northern States. I remember to have seen a country-house, which had the air of the residence of a man of fortune, while travelling in the interior of New-York. Cadwallader demanded its owner's name of a man by the road side. "It is near dinner-time,"

he then coolly said, "and we shall not fare well in these woods at the inn; let us try Mr. ————'s table." "Do you know him, then?" "Not at all; I know his family, and he must know mine." Of course I was anxious to see the result of such an interview. A servant was asked if Mr. ———— was at his residence? The answer was favourable. We were ushered into a genteel saloon, where we found a very gentleman-like man, a well-bred woman, and two or three charming daughters. "I am Mr. John Cadwallader, of Cadwallader, in ——— county," said my friend, "and I have taken the liberty to pay my respects to you in passing." Our host held out both hands, and expressed his satisfaction at the *compliment;* I was then introduced, and we found the dinner so abundant, and the wines so delicious (to say nothing of the young ladies) that we were induced to stay till next day for a second trial. In fifty other instances, have gentlemen who had heard of our presence in their neighbourhoods, ridden miles to meet us, and to invite us to their dwellings; and I do firmly believe, that through Virginia and the Carolinas, and in several other States, we might have travelled without spending a sixpence, or eating, drinking, or sleeping in an inn. Indeed, I am persuaded that this hospitality is one reason why the inns are not better in the southern States, for, out of the towns, they are generally worse than they are found to be farther north.

From what I have written, you must have already gathered that the southern States are to be divided into two classes of society, or, rather, that in some instances, one State may, in itself, contain both. I allude to the material difference which exists between the small proprietors, who are, to all intents, capital farmers, with from four, or even from one, to twenty slaves, and the great planters, who own several hundreds. The former generally grow wheat, corn,

(maize) and all the other articles of a divided husbandry; while the others produce tobacco, rice, cotton, or sugar. They are, however, beginning to grow tobacco in some of the free States, as in Ohio.

But I have not room, or knowledge enough, to enter into the endless details which such a state of society, and regions so vast, can produce. You will see some curious accounts of manners and customs in the "Letters from the South," a book that is ascribed to Mr. Paulding, an American writer, who stands among the highest of his countrymen for talent, and who, being a gentleman generally known to his countrymen, has had the best opportunities for observing their manners in those parts of the country that he has visited.

TO THE COUNT JULES DE BÉTHIZY,

&c. &c.

Boston, ———

I ARRIVED here about a fortnight since, in order to see the town, and to witness a ceremony that took place yesterday. Before attempting a description of the latter, I shall give a brief answer to your question concerning the movements of your countryman.

During my recent excursions to the south, I frequently met La Fayette, who has now been in nearly all, if not in every one, of the twenty-four States of this Union. So far from the warmth and cordiality of his reception having in the least abated, he is just as much the object of affectionate and sincere atten-

tion to-day as he was the hour he landed. We were in New-York together lately, when there was a constant succession of entertainments in his honour, and as earnest a desire manifested to press about his person as in the interviews I have so often related.

Among the different public exhibitions got up on this occasion, there was one which is worthy of being particularly mentioned, by its singularity. There is a great deal of wood used in the construction of most American houses. Until within the last twenty years a great many in New-York (more especially in the less pretending quarters of the town) were built of this material altogether. There are, consequently, an extraordinary number of fires in that city. Fires are infinitely more frequent in all parts of America than in Europe, from this very cause. In a city like New-York, it is also a consequence of frequent danger from such an enemy, that there exist admirable skill and preparation to subdue it. It is often said, and, from repeated observation I believe it to be true, that the firemen of New-York are more expert and adventurous than those of any other town in the world. When an alarm is given, the citizens, in general, give themselves no trouble in the matter, unless chance has placed them in the immediate vicinity of the danger. The cry is sounded by boys and repeated by the firemen themselves, for a minute or two, and then a few or more bells, according to the degree of the danger, ring the alarm. In the day these frequent cries produce no extraordinary sensation, but when they break in upon the stillness and security of the night, I scarcely know a more startling or disagreeable interruption to one's slumbers. There is a defect in this part of the arrangement, though it is difficult to see how it can be well remedied under the present system. The firemen are citizens; chiefly shop-keepers and mechanics, and they pursue their ordinary employments at all

times, except when required to meet to render aid, or occasionally for the purpose of discipline. The latter is little needed, however, in a place where there is so much serious practice.

I remember to have been at one of these fires in the night. A vast pile of pine boards, which filled a lot adjoining a row of noble brick houses, was in flames when I reached the place. Within fifty feet, on the other side, there stood a small temporary wooden building. The sheets of the element flashed upwards against a battlement of brick, which they even surmounted, and bending like the tongue of the serpent, they wound themselves along the cornices of the adjoining dwelling. It was too late to save much of the lumber, and all the attention of the firemen was given to the buildings. Engine arrived after engine, with great rapidity; and with the most beautiful accuracy, the captain of each machine took his station in the place he was ordered to occupy. There might have been two thousand persons collected at the spot; but scarcely any other sound was heard than the whizzing of the streams of water, the strokes of the engines, and the crackling of the conflagration. Water was thrown from one machine to another, by means of conducting leathern tubes. One of those, near which I stood, burst. I followed the man who was sent on the errand that immediately succeeded the discovery of the accident. He approached a carriage loaded with the article he needed, and communicated the fact; "So many feet of hose," said the person to whom he addressed himself, with perfect quiet; it was supplied, and the damage was repaired without the slightest confusion, and without the least unnecessary delay. From time to time, the flames were seen kindling on the roof of a small wooden building, and then the engine nearest the conflagration directed its stream, for an instant, to the spot. No rifleman could have sent his deadly

messenger with surer aim, than the water fell upon the little torch-like flame.

The families continued in the adjoining houses, and the proprietor of the building next the lumber, resolutely refused to open his doors for the removal of the furniture, though his cornices were frequently blazing. He was right; for the steadiness, activity, and skill of the firemen, soon reduced the glaring torrent of the elements to a pile of black smouldering ruin.

The ceremony to which I alluded in the opening of this letter, was a review of these firemen by La Fayette. The engines, with their companies, were all assembled in the little park (paddock would be a better name,) in front of the City Hall. These engines bear some such comparison to the engines of Europe, as the English mail-coaches, on a birth-day, bear to the ordinary French diligences in the provinces. No nobleman's carriage is more glossy, neater, or, considering their respective objects, of more graceful form. They are also a little larger than those we see on our side of the Atlantic, though not in the least clumsy. When La Fayette had passed in front of these beautiful and exquisitely neat machines, they formed themselves in a circle. At a signal the engines were played, and forty limpid streams shot upward, toward an imaginary point in the air. It appeared to me that they all reached that point at the same instant, and their water uniting, they formed a *jet d'eau* that was as remarkable for its conceit as for its beauty.

But the ceremony yesterday, was of a very different description. It was the anniversary of the battle of Bunker's hill. Fifty years ago, the yeomanry of New England first met the battalions of England, in open and deadly conflict. The affair of Lexington had occurred a few weeks earlier; but, though blood was first drawn in that straggling contest, it neither

produced the important results, nor was it characterized by so many striking and memorable incidents as the affair on the hill.

In the battle of Bunker's hill, the Americans had no positive leader. A thousand men, chiefly youths under the age of five-and-twenty, passed over in the night from the adjacent country, into the peninsula of Charlestown. It was intended to occupy a high conical eminence called Bunker's hill, at the distance of long cannon-shot from the batteries in the town of Boston. By some mistake, the working party advanced much nearer to the enemy, and took possession of a much lower ridge of land, that terminated suddenly at a short distance in their front, quite near to the shore. The latter hill was, in fact, known by the name of Breed's.* Here a small redoubt, flanked by a low entrenchment, was thrown up. The party who performed this labour, was led by a gentleman of the name of Prescott, who had seen some service in the colonial wars, and who held the rank of colonel in the levies of the province of Massachusetts Bay. You will remember that the affair occurred in the summer of 1775, and, as the independence of the colonies was not declared until July 1776, the appellation of *States* was then unknown.

There was an eminent physician in Boston, of the name of Warren, who had acted a conspicuous part in all the political measures that preceded the quarrel. This person was distinguished for his high moral intrepidity. As he was a man in the vigour of life, and of a daring mind, the provincial congress of Massachusetts had chosen him a major-general in their levies only the day before the battle.

General Warren appeared on Breed's hill in the

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* Bunker and Breed are the names of two families of New-England. Individuals of those names were, or had been, the owners of the two hills in question.

morning, bearing a musket, though not with any desire to exercise his newly acquired military authority. Delicacy to his veteran countryman, and perhaps some incompleteness in the forms of his appointment, might have forbidden such an assumption of power. It is said that Mr. Prescott offered him the command, and that he declined assuming it. In the course of the movements that preceded the conflict, General Putnam, a well-known partisan officer of the adjoining province of Connecticut, led some small bodies into the peninsula, over whom, he of course exercised a species of authority. But the chief command, if it belonged to any one, was the right of Mr. Prescott, who constructed, and who held the half-finished redoubt. The result of the battle is well known; but, unhappily, at its close, Mr. Warren, or as he is usually called from the nature of his death, *General* Warren, fell, by a musket-ball which passed through his head.

The exceeding merit and unquestionable patriotism, no less than the high rank which this gentleman was destined by his countrymen to fill, induced them to consider his loss, and very justly, as the greatest calamity that befell them on that day. A small, unpretending monument, of very perishable materials, had, therefore, been erected to his memory, on the precise spot where he fell. But it is now intended to rear a column in granite, which shall be more worthy of the great occasion, and more in conformity with the augmented means of the State, to perpetuate an event which is deemed to be so creditable to their exertions in the conflict. The ceremony of yesterday was to lay the corner-stone of this monument.

I shall not pretend to enter into a detail of proceedings that were alike noble and affecting. Tens of thousands were on the hill, and Mr. Webster, a distinguished citizen of Boston, addressed his coun-

trymen from a stand where his words reached the ears of a multitude. I saw La Fayette in the occupancy of a high place, and when the orator spoke of his particular services, there were a few minutes of intense and delightful interest. There was also a little group of gray-headed and tottering veterans, who, fifty years before, had risked their lives, or shed their blood, on the precise spot where so many people had now assembled in prosperous and peaceful security. Altogether it was one of the most interesting ceremonies I ever witnessed, and I regret that my limits absolutely forbid its description. Among other things, there was an entertainment spread on the hill, of near or quite four thousand covers.

Boston is a wealthy, a thriving, and decidedly a picturesque town. It stands on an uneven surface, and it occupies nearly the whole of a peninsula of several miles in circuit. Large villages are rising on the adjoining shores, at the different points where the numerous bridges connect the town with what may be called the main. The population, within a circumference of twelve miles, must, I think, exceed eighty thousand souls. The harbour is beautiful, and dotted with islands. It is one of the most secure in America, and would easily contain five or six hundred sail. But there is no fixing its limits, as it is several miles to the open sea, and warehouses might be erected to advantage on most of the islands, especially if a few breakwaters were constructed.

One of the best, and the oldest of the universities of the United States, is within a few miles of Boston. We visited this institution, as well as that of Yale, in our journey to this place. We dined in the commons of the latter, with one of the tutors. I was struck with one circumstance on this occasion, which, as it is in striking contrast with what occurs in the universities of the mother country, I shall mention.

Cadwallader has a kinsman at Yale, who is de-

scended from one of the wealthiest and best known families of this country. The young man himself, who is a fine, gentleman-like and manly youth, is actually in possession (or will be on attaining his majority) of a fortune that would be deemed very large in most countries. He dined at a table within twenty feet of us. During the repast, which was exceedingly simple and without any beverage but water and cider, I observed one of the servants coolly seated by the side of, and in close conference with, the kinsman of my friend. In a few minutes the domestic arose to hand the bread to one of the young gentlemen. In the course of the evening, when we were at our inn, I ventured to ask the youth if the servants of the university were permitted to take such liberties. The face of the young man flushed, and he told me he did not understand me. I explained. "Oh, that was ———; he is a class-mate: but he waits, during the meals, in order to pay his board: he is poor, and can do no better." "And you make a companion of him?" "Why not: is poverty a shame?" I was silenced, and when ——— had left us, the conversation was renewed between Cadwallader and myself.

"There is a singular but gross error prevalent in Europe," said my friend, "on the subject of the influence of wealth in America. Money is a positive good every where, since it buys not only necessaries, but commands, in a greater or less degree, the respect of those who wish to profit by it. But money is more within the reach of individuals here than any where else, at least, a sufficiency of money to leave men in the possession of those independent feelings which belong to nature, and which must be suppressed by some artificial cause, or they will be found in every bosom, inasmuch as they depend on the inherent qualities of pride and will. I think money of more importance in England, than in any country I

have ever visited. It is obviously necessary it should be so, since, without it, men are reduced to scanty means of subsistence, and to a straitened and often miserable economy. I have seen people in England with incomes of two or three hundred a year, existing in narrow lodgings, compelled to calculate closely the amount of their daily consumption, and positively enjoying no one exclusive advantage; when men of the same income, in America, might dwell in houses of three times their size, better furnished, and supplied in abundance with every necessary of life; indeed, in an abundance that is scarcely known in any part of Europe. I know this fact from close observation. People may wish to dispute it; but the prices of things are sufficient evidences of its truth. There is scarcely a necessary of life, clothes and some few manufactured articles excepted, that is not to be had at about half the cost in America that it can be had in England. But most of the exceptions are articles to be purchased rarely: in the articles of luxury, there is no comparison. It is, therefore, no more than a natural consequence of such abundance, that money should be less esteemed than where indulgences are dearer. Then our institutions, our habits, and our opinions, give no artificial importance to wealth. A man can neither buy preferment in church, state, army, navy, nor in any thing else, with his dollars. He can give dinners, and he can educate his children, and give them manners, and, in this direct and natural manner, advance his own or their importance but there the benefits of money cease. I do not mean to say that society is not penetrated in America by the use of money, for it is to be penetrated everywhere by its agency; but it must be done here exactly as it is done in France, for instance; and it has vastly less instrumentality in effecting that object than it has in England. A rich widow cannot get precedency of her superiors, by giving her hand to any

possessor of a high title; nor can a seat in Congress be bought, and dollars be made the entering wedge of further advancement, except as people choose to yield to their influence in the shape of entertainments, extravagance, and show. In point of fact, money, without character, will do little here beyond what it can get in plain barter. But you have been at Oxford. There, young men can buy silk gowns, and, with silk gowns, consideration, and with consideration that is bought by money, they get exaggerated and unnatural ideas of its importance. You see young ——— never dreamt that his class-mate was poor, though he himself has more than twenty thousand a year. I affirm, for I have passed the ordeal, and I know it, that the thought of distinction from money never enters the head of an American schoolboy, unless, indeed, it may be the child of some exceedingly vulgar *parvenu*.

"Now, what can be more absurd than the fact that grave English writers are constantly affirming, that there is no other ground of distinction in America than money? This incessant habit of asserting so glaring a falsehood can only proceed from a consciousness of the exorbitant influence of wealth among themselves. There is no sort of doubt, that when money is united to merit and talent, in the United States, it can do more than when the latter qualities stand unsupported by so powerful an ally; but among all the unjust and ridiculous charges brought against us, there is not one more absurd than this, that money places men in power, or at the head of society, or high in the estimation of their fellow-citizens. With the exception of the Patroon, there is not a decidedly wealthy man in the whole representation of the State of New-York. Mr. Clinton is notoriously very poor. Of all the Presidents, only one could be called rich. There is not a man of any great fortune in any one of the higher offices of the

general government; and it is not thought very reputable for a man of good estate to fill a situation of mere emolument. Indeed, his countrymen would not let him have it, for the simple reason that he had enough already, unless his peculiar talents were needed.

"As to society, it must always support that part of its influence which is dependent on show and expense, by money; but in large towns, where there is competition in wealth, as in other things, money does but little in this way, and it is every hour doing less. You scarcely saw a *parvenu*, unless he had merit, (and a large proportion of our *parvenus* have merit,) in the circle into which I introduced you, though you saw a vast number of men of breeding and character, who had very little money. It is impossible to prevent people who have money from riding in coaches and giving entertainments, and it is not possible to prevent people of grovelling minds from envying them these enjoyments; but it is possible for a community to be so constituted as to limit the superiority of mere money; and if such a community exists on the globe, it exists here. I dare say that men who have made their money, get purse-proud, in the United States, as they do in other places; but it must be proved that men who have not money are abject, and time-serving, and spiritless, before any thing is made out towards establishing that money does more in America than it does in France, or half as much as it does in England."

I must say, that my own observations confirm this opinion. There was a beautiful simplicity in the conduct of young ———, that denoted an entire absence of the coarser influence of money, and which spoke volumes in favour of the wise regulations of the institutions of his college. I am assured, and, so far as opportunity will allow me to speak, I have every where seen the most perfect and just equality in the

treatment of the youths, in all the public schools I have visited. I am told that this was not always the case. In Harvard College, for instance, before the revolution, the aristocratic classification of the mother country prevailed, and boys were taught from earliest life, to consider the adventitious circumstances of wealth and birth as being things of primary good. As Cadwallader says, they who write of this country, should know more of the actual state of its society before they affirm so boldly that this or that influence controls society, on authority no better than the habits of those who live under systems so totally different. I have certainly seen sneers in the public journals, and heard them uttered too, against the sudden elevation of this or that individual, by means of his wealth; but I find, on examination, that his rise is little more than the style he can display, at the cost of money, and that the bottom of the complaints is generally envy. The boldness and distinctness with which these remarks themselves are made, are proofs that there is no overwhelming, since there is not even a silencing, influence attached to the possession of wealth.

TO THE COMTE JULES DE BÉTHIZY.

&c. &c.

Washington, ———

My pen grows weary, for I have seen so much, and written so little to the purpose, that I feel disposed to throw it away altogether. After making the tour of the coast of New-England, and seeing all its large towns, I have returned here to prepare for my departure. I cannot quit the country, however, without giving you a summary of the information I

have gained, or without indulging a little in speculations to which that information must naturally give rise.

The first reflection that is excited in the mind of an intelligent foreigner, after visiting these States, is an inquiry into the causes that have affected so much with means so limited, and in a time so short. A century ago, the whole of the 1,000,000 of square miles that are now more or less occupied by these people, did not contain a million of souls. So late as the year 1776, the population was materially under 3,000,000; nor at the time did they actually cover more than 200,000 square miles, if indeed they covered as much. But since the peace of 1783, activity, enterprise, intelligence, and skill, appear to have been contending with each other, and they have certainly produced a result that the world has never before witnessed. I have heard Europeans say, that when they have heard that the Americans, of whom they had been accustomed to think as dwellers in remote and dark forests, possessed a million of tons of shipping, they believed their neutral character had made their flag a cloak for the enterprise and wealth of other nations. No doubt their commerce was a little unnaturally forced, and many frauds did exist; but the motives for deception have ceased these dozen years, and still America has a million and a half of tonnage. Perhaps no one demonstration of the energy of this population has excited in Europe the surprise that has been created by the boldness and dexterity with which they have constructed canals, that put to shame all similar works any where else. We understand the nature and the expense of this description of public works, and we know how to make a proper estimate of the enterprise necessary to effect them. But although the system of canals, which has broke so suddenly into existence in the United States, within the last ten years, argues an advanced and advancing

state of society, it manifests no new principle of energy. It may be a higher exhibition of the quality, since the stage of improvement demands a superior manifestation of skill; but, believe me, the spirit which has produced it has not been dormant an hour since the British colonies have achieved their independence.

Although circumstances have lessened the interest which Europe has felt in America, it may be well questioned, whether the United States do not, at this hour, enjoy a higher consideration, on our side of the Atlantic, than the political doctrines, formerly in fashion, would have given to a people so dispersed, so few in numbers, and so remote. Their vast and growing commerce, alone, makes them an object of the greatest attention; and the sure conviction that the child of that commerce, a marine, is likely soon to play its part in the great game of nations, gives additional interest to this republic. Still our anticipations are vague, founded on data but imperfectly understood, and, at all times, fettered by the prejudices and distinctive opinions of our own hemisphere.

In the first place, the influence of emigration on the growth of the United States has been usually overrated by Europeans. I have had occasion to say, already, that for thirty years it did not add many more than five thousand souls, annually, to the population. The fact is sufficiently known by the returns of the custom-houses, where all masters of vessels are obliged to report the number of their passengers. It is true, that thousands, who leave the mother country for the British provinces, find their way into the republic by land; but, perhaps, an equal number of natives have removed into the Canadas, the upper province of which is nearly, or quite half, peopled by emigrants from the States, or their descendants.

The first, the most important and the least understood, cause of the exceeding advance of the Ameri-

can States, is to be found in the character of their population. The general diffusion of a respectable degree of intelligence, would, of itself, produce an effect that it might be difficult to estimate precisely, but which may be always traced in its strongest point of view, in the respective conditions of the savage and of the civilized man. In addition to this general and mighty cause, the actual necessities of society supply an incentive to ingenuity and talent, that are wanted elsewhere. Were the American an indolent and contented being, nurtured in dulness, and kept in ignorance of the incentives which prompt men to exertion, this very state of necessity might serve to depress him still lower in the scale of being. But there is nothing more surprising in the country, than the universal knowledge which exists of the condition of Europe. Their wants, therefore, feed their desires, and, together, they give birth to all the thousand auxiliaries of exceeding ingenuity. A proof of this fact is to be found in the manner in which the first canal of any importance was constructed. As it speaks volumes on the subject, I shall relate it.

Five-and-twenty years ago, engineers from Europe began to make their appearance in America. They brought with them the rules of science, and a competent knowledge of the estimates of force, and the adaptation of principles to results; but they brought them, all calculated to meet the contingencies of the European man. Experience showed that they neither knew how to allow for the difficulties of a novel situation, nor for the excess of intellect they were enabled to use. Their estimates were always wild, uncertain, and fatal, in a country that was still experimenting. But five-and-twenty years ago was too soon for canals in America. It was wise to wait for a political symptom in a country where a natural impulse will always indicate the hour for action. Though five-and-twenty, or twenty, or even

fifteen years, were too soon, still ten were not. Ten years ago, demonstrations had been made which enabled keen observers to detect that the time for extraordinary exertion had come. The great western canal of New-York was conceived and planned. But instead of seeking for European engineers, a few of the common surveyors of the country were called to the aid of those who were intrusted with the duty of making the estimates; and men of practical knowledge, who understood the people with whom they had to deal, and who had tutored their faculties in the thousand collisions of active life, were brought to the task as counsellors. The result is worthy of grave attention. The work, in its fruits and in its positive extent, exceeded any thing of a similar nature ever attempted in Christendom. The authority to whom responsibility was due, was more exacting than any of our hemisphere. Economy was inculcated to a degree little known in other nations; and, in short, greater accuracy than usual was required under circumstances apparently the least favourable to attain it. Now, this canal was made (with such means) at a materially less cost, in infinitely less time, and with a boldness in the estimates, and an accuracy in the results, that were next to marvellous. There was not a man of any reputation for science employed in the work. But the utmost practical knowledge of men and of things was manifested in the whole of the affair. The beginning of each year brought its estimate of the expense, and of the profits, and the close its returns, in wonderful conformity. The labour is completed, and the benefit is exceeding the hopes of the most sanguine.

In this sketch of the circumstances under which the New-York canal has been made, we may trace the cause of the prodigious advance of this nation. Some such work as this was necessary to demonstrate to the world, that the qualities which are so exclu-

sively the fruits of liberty and of a diffused intelligence, have an existence elsewhere than in the desires of the good. Without it, it might have been said, the advance of America is deceptive; she is doing no more than our own population could do under circumstances that admitted of so much display; but she will find the difference between felling trees, and burning forests, and giving the finish which denotes the material progress of society. The mouths of such critics are now silenced. The American can point to his ploughs, to his ships, to his canals, to his bridges, and, in short, to every thing that is useful in his particular state of society, and demand, where a better or a cheaper has been produced, under any thing like circumstances of equality?

It is vain to deny the causes or the effects of the American system, dear Béthizy; nor should a man as philanthropic as yourself wish to deny them, since they rest on principles that favour the happiness and prosperity of the human race. We should not cavil about names, nor minor distinctions, in governments, if the great and moving principles are such as contemplate the improvement of the species in the mass, and not in exclusive and selfish exceptions.

The second great cause of the advancement of the United States is the abundance which is the consequence of room and of intelligence united, and which admits of so rapid an increase of its positive physical force. It is known that the population has doubled in about twenty-three years, though it is supposed that this rate of increase is gradually diminishing. It is probable that in the next fifty-five years, there will be two more duplications of the amount. Of this number, supposing that slavery continues in its present form, and under its present influences, (two things that cannot be rationally supposed,) seven millions will be slaves, and forty-three millions freemen. But slavery, though on the increase, as a whole, is known

not to be on the increase in a ratio equal to that of the whites.

The third cause of the great progress of this country, and it is one intimately blended with all the other moral causes, is the perfect freedom of its civil and religious institutions, which give the utmost possible play to the energies, and the strongest possible inducements to the laudable ambition of man.

There is unquestionably a powerful action and reaction between all these influences, which produce a vast combined result. A rapid review of what has been done in the way of general improvement, in the nation, may serve to give some idea of their effects.

I shall not write here of the condition of the army, and navy, and militia, since enough has been already said to furnish a sufficiently accurate knowledge of those branches of the subject.

The finances of the United States, you know to be prosperous. The public debt, at the close of the last war, (1815,) amounted to about 120,000,000. On the first of October, 1827, it was 68,913,541 dollars. But as seven millions of this debt was created for the purchase of the bank stock so often named, the true debt should not be estimated at more than 61,913,541 dollars.* This debt pays an interest of 6, 5, 4½, and 3 per cent. On 13,296,247 dollars, an interest of 3 per cent. is paid; on 28,831,128, an interest of 6 per cent. is paid; on 15,993,972, an interest of 4½ per cent. is paid; on 5,792,000, an interest of 5 per cent. is paid. These sums make the amount named. The gradual diminution of the debt is taking place as fast as the terms of the loans will admit,

* On the first of January 1828, it was estimated to be 67,413,377 dollars; or, deducting the seven millions for bank stock, at 60,413,377. The writer has since seen it announced, that 5,000,000 of principal will be paid on the 1st of July, 1828, so that the debt of the United States, on that day, will be about 55,413,377 dollars, if the cost of the bank stock shall be deducted. (See next page.)

and on those portions which pay the highest rate of interest. The last *may* be redeemed in 1835, and probably *will* be redeemed, at the present rate of diminution, before the end of the next dozen years, unless some new causes for loans should occur. In addition to these facts, it must be remembered that a stock which pays but three per cent. is never worth par. Thus, if the 13,296,247 of the 3 per cents. can be bought for 80 dollars in the 100, this portion of the debt is also reduced in point of fact to 10,596,968 dollars. So that, all things considered, the whole actual debt of the United States cannot be considered as being more (on the 1st of July, 1828) than 52,714,098 dollars, or something less than 12,000,000 of pounds sterling.

In a country so united in interests, but so separated by distance, a system of extended and easy internal communication is of vital importance. Without it, neither commerce, nor political harmony, nor intelligence, could exist to the degree that is necessary to the objects of the confederation. It has therefore been effected at some cost, but in a manner that is already returning its reward in pecuniary profit, as well as in the other great essentials named. The subject naturally divides itself into three branches, viz. that of information, that of internal trade, and that of personal communication.

For the first, the general post-office, with its numberless dependencies, has been established. The diffusion of intelligence is justly considered by the American statesmen to be no less important to the preservation of their institutions, than to the general advancement of the character and power of the nation. There are in the country about 7000 post-offices, (1828,) and a nearly incalculable distance of post route. The chief of this department says, that there is now scarcely an inhabited district of any size in all these vast regions, to which the ramifica-

tions of these routes do not extend. The same admirable economy exists in the management of this department, as in all the others of the government. Although it is quite plain that comparatively little correspondence can exist to defray the expenses of routes so extended, yet the department not only pays for itself, but it is beginning to yield a small revenue to the country. One would think that, under such circumstances, the cost of letters and journals was greater here than elsewhere. You shall judge for yourself. A letter for less than thirty miles pays six cents; for less than eighty, and over thirty, ten cents; for less than one hundred and fifty miles, and over eighty, twelve and a half cents; for all distances over four hundred miles, twenty-five cents. A cent is one hundredth part of a dollar, or about an English half-penny: thus a letter will be transferred fifteen hundred miles, for a shilling sterling. Double letters pay double, until they attain a certain weight, when they begin to pay by the ounce. Printed sheets, journals, or any thing else, pay one cent, for less than one hundred miles, per sheet, and one cent and a half for all distances over. The editors of public journals receive all their printed sheets gratis. The mail is carried in coaches a great proportion of the distance, in sulkies in other portions, and on horseback the rest.

The personal communication is effected by means of stage-coaches and steam-boats. The vast rivers, and the prodigious facilities that are offered by means of the bays, enable passengers to travel with astonishing ease, rapidity and cheapness. The traveller may leave Boston by land; a ride of forty-five miles brings him to Providence; here he embarks for New-York, 200 miles further, by the way of the sound of Long Island; the Raritan carries him to Brunswick; a few miles more of land carriage takes him to the Delaware; the river and bay of that name bring him to Newcastle; three hours by land, and he is on the waters

of the Chesapeake; from the bay he may ascend half a dozen rivers, or proceed along the coast. At Norfolk, he enters a canal, and by means of sounds, bays, and trifling land carriage, it is quite possible to reach the southern limits of Georgia. Most of this route is travelled in the manner I have described, and the rest of it is daily getting to be more so.

The internal commerce of America exists with the least possible encumbrance. It is conducted chiefly by water, and an immense deal of it is done coastwise, by means of the rivers, that are so many arteries penetrating the country in every direction. A license costs a few dollars, (two I believe,) and when a vessel is provided with such a document, there is no impediment to its passage into any of the public waters of the country. The whole confederation is unqualifiedly one nation in respect to commerce.

The government of the United States is also making certain military roads that are intended to intersect the country in those directions in which water does not flow. In addition to these improvements, States and chartered companies are effecting a vast deal more in the same way, that I have neither the room nor the knowledge necessary to communicate. As the debt is discharged, and larger sums come into the disposal of Congress, it is to be presumed that they will increase the expenditures, by advancing the improvement of the country in all things that properly belong to their power.

In manufactures, the Americans have made immense progress, since their separation from the mother country. The great Lord Chatham declared it should be the policy of England to prevent her colonies from manufacturing even a hobnail; and this plan of monopolizing wealth was tolerably successful, so long as the Americans were dependent on England, and even for many years afterwards. But, although the importations of this country, for home consumption,

are greater now than they ever have been, its own manufactures have increased fifty-fold.

The question of protecting manufactures by legislative enactments, is the one which involves more political warmth, at the present time, than any other question of mere policy. Indeed, it may be said to be the only one. The disputants are chiefly men that are immediately interested in the result, though it is certain, that a few leading politicians adopt the opposite sides on policy or on principle. The only real point in dispute is, whether America has reached the period when it has become her interest to encourage her manufactures, at some little expense to her commerce, or rather at some little expense and loss to those who are engaged in particular branches of commerce, since it is obvious that nothing can have a greater tendency to increase the trade between different sections of a country like this, than increasing its objects. A vast deal is said, pro and con, on this subject. One party contends that it will destroy the shipping, and prove fatal to the revenue. If this reasoning be true, then the time is inevitable when the shipping and revenue of the United States must disappear, for nothing is more certain than that the time will come, when a vast proportion of their population will find that no great community can exist in prosperity, without a division of employment. But it is plain that these partisans utter absurdities, since it is a matter of perfect indifference to the citizen to whom or by what process he pays the dollar of duty that he is now obliged to pay for his coat. If the collector of some port does not receive it, some other collector can and will. But this dollar will be paid on an increased price, since the American manufacturer cannot put his goods in the market as cheap as the foreign manufacturer, or he would not ask for protection. This may be true at the moment, and I am of opinion, that, with the exception

of articles that are deemed important to defence, and perhaps to certain articles that require some little time to give them the perfection necessary to competition, no laws will be passed immediately on the subject. The question of manufactures is, however, clearly one of interest. Of their usefulness, and of their being one of the most active agents of wealth, as well as of the comfort of society, there can be no doubt. It is therefore like so many other questions in America, purely one of time. Although it may not accord with her policy this year, to encourage them, or for her citizens to embark in them, the result is inevitable. A nation that lives as fast as this, does not compute time by ordinary calculations. Fifty years ago, they manufactured next to nothing. They now manufacture almost every article of familiar use, and very many of them, much better than the articles that are imported. They even begin to export. The coarse cotton goods of this country are already sent to South America, and I am told that they are preferred to the British. Importations of coarse cottons from India have entirely ceased; and indeed I was assured that their coarse cottons were greatly preferred in their own markets to any other.

The American manufacturer has to contend with one difficulty, that is not known to the manufacturers of other countries. The unobstructed commerce of the United States admits of importations from all quarters, and of course the consumer is accustomed to gratify his taste with the best articles. A French duke might be content to use a French knife or a French lock; but an American merchant would reject both: he knows that the English are better. On the other hand, an English duchess (unless she could smuggle a little) might be content with an English silk; but an American lady would openly dress herself in silk manufactured at Lyons. The same is true of hundreds of other articles. The American

manufacturer is therefore compelled to start into existence full grown, or nearly so, in order to command success. I think this peculiarity will have, and has had, the effect to retard the appearance of articles manufactured in the country, though it will make their final success as sure as their appearance will be sudden.

It is impossible to speak with certainty on the details of a question so complicated. A thousand articles are manufactured already, and may be considered as established. Twenty years ago, the Americans imported all their good hats; fifteen years ago, they imported most of their coarse cottons; and ten years ago, they imported most, if not all, of their fine glass and ornamental hardware, such as fire-grates, &c. A vast deal of these importations have ceased, and I am told that, considering the increase of the consumers, they are diminishing daily.

Though the particular matter that is now in dispute may be one of deep interest to certain merchants and manufacturers, it is clearly not the main question. Manufacturing is a pursuit so natural, and one so evidently necessary to all extended communities, that its adoption is inevitable at some day or other. The policy of the Americans wisely leaves them, in all cases except those of extraordinary necessity, (which become exceptions of course,) to the operation of natural influences. Policy will, nineteen times in twenty, indicate its own wants. If it be admitted that a people, who possess the raw materials in abundance, who enjoy the fruits of the earth to an excess that renders their cultivation little profitable, must have recourse to their ingenuity, and to their industry, to find new employments and different sources of wealth, then the Americans must become manufacturers. When the true hour shall arrive, it will be vain to utter speculative reasons, for the wants of the nation will work out their own cure.

If restrictive laws shall be necessary to effect it, the people will allow of a lesser evil to get rid of a greater. When the manufacturers of America have once got fairly established, so that practice has given them skill, and capital has accumulated a little, there will be no fear of foreign competition. The exceeding ingenuity and wonderful aptitude of these people will give them the same superiority in the fabrication of a button or of a yard of cloth, as they now possess in the construction of a ship, or as they have manifested that they possess in the construction of a canal. A sufficient motive is all that is necessary to induce exertion. They have taken the infallible measure to insure success, in bringing the greatest possible number of competitors into action, by diffusing intelligence so widely, and to an extent so creditable. I think that most questions of manufacturing will be settled practically in the next five-and-twenty years.

The vast extent of the United States affords all the means of wealth and comfort that climate, mines, and other natural facilities, can supply. They are known to possess lead, copper, gold, iron, salt, and coal. The lead mines of Missouri are very extensive, and, with little or no skill, are already productive. The gold of Carolina is probably quite as abundant as is desirable. Copper is found in many places, but it is not yet much wrought. Iron is abundant, much worked, and some of it is more esteemed than any imported. Salt abounds, and could easily supply the whole country, or even furnish the article for exportation. It is not mined for yet, since the springs are found so saturated with the mineral as to render the process of boiling and evaporation more profitable. Coal exists in various parts of the country. It is procured, however, chiefly in Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Rhode Island. It is of various kinds, and of different degrees of excellence. That most in use is of the class *an*

thracite. Of this species there are several gradations of quality. That of Pennsylvania is said to be the best. Mountains of coal exist in that State, and the people of the growing manufacturing town of Pittsburgh cut it out of the hills with as much facility as they would bring away an equal weight of dirt. Canals and railways are made to several of the coal mines, or rather coal *mountains*, and domestic coal is getting into very general use. The coal of eastern Pennsylvania is most fortunately placed. It lies within sixty or seventy miles of Philadelphia, to which place it is already conveyed by water. Philadelphia has a large capital, is now a great manufacturing town, and will probably be one of the largest in the world in the course of half a century. When at Philadelphia, coal, or any thing else, can be carried by water to any part of the country which has a water communication with the ocean.

The cultivation of the vine has commenced. Wine is already made; though, as time is absolutely necessary to produce excellence in the quality of the grape, and as capital is still easily convertible to so many lucrative uses, it is possible that half a century may elapse before the United States shall export their liquors. That they will sooner or later do so, is, I think, beyond a doubt. The silk-worm is also beginning to attract attention, and plantations of the olive are coming daily more into fashion. In short, there are no means of comfort, indulgence, or wealth, that the Americans, in some one part of their country, cannot command; and it would be as weak, as it will unquestionably be false, to suppose that a people so sagacious and so active will neglect them beyond the moment when circumstances shall render their adoption profitable or convenient.

The construction of canals, on a practical scale, the mining for coal, the exportation of cotton goods, and numberless other improvements, which argue an

advancing state of society, have all sprung into existence within the last dozen years.* It is a knowledge of these facts, with a clear and sagacious understanding of their immense results, coupled with the exciting moral causes, that render the American sanguine, aspiring, and confident in his anticipations. He sees that his nation lives centuries in an age, and he feels no disposition to consider himself a child, because other people, in their dotage, choose to remember the hour of his birth.

How pitiful do the paltry criticisms on an inn, or the idle, and, half the time, vulgar comments on the vulgarity of a *parvenu*, become, when objects and facts like these are pressing themselves on the mind! I have heard it said, that there are European authors who feel a diffidence of contracting acquaintances with American gentlemen, because they feel a consciousness of having turned the United States into ridicule! I can tell these unfortunate subjects of a precipitate opinion, that they may lay aside their scruples. No American of any character, or knowledge of his own country, can feel any thing but commiseration for the man who has attempted to throw ridicule on a nation like this. The contest is too unequal to admit of any doubt as to the result, and the wiser way will be for these Quixotes in literature to say and think as little as possible about their American tilting match, in order that the world may not liken their lances to that used by the hero of La Mancha, and their helmets to barbers' basins.

* Forty years ago, no cotton was raised in the United States.

TO SIR EDWARD WALLER, BART.

&c. &c.

Washington, ———

HAVING given so much of our attention to the subject of the sources of the national importance possessed by the Americans, it may not be without its use to devote an hour to the consideration of the manner in which they will probably be used. The points of main interest are, whether the present republican institutions of the country will endure, and whether the States will long continue to act as one people, or will submit to be divided into two or more confederacies.

The first fact that strikes an intelligent man, in considering the structure of this government, and the state of society that exists under it, is its perfectly natural formation. It is scarcely possible, I am not sure that it is possible, to conceive of a community which has attained the advantages of high civilization, that is less artificial.

In order that individual efforts should be excited (without which nations must inevitably become sluggish, and finally barbarous, though dwelling in any abundance,) the rights of property are respected. Beyond this the law leaves every man (the slaves in the southern States excepted) on grounds of perfect equality. This equality is, however, an equality of rights only; since talents, money, and enterprise, being left to their natural influences, produce their natural effects, and no more.

In respect to the continuation of the present republican institutions of this country, every fact, every symptom, and all reasoning, is, I think, in their fa-

vour. In the first place, they have, in substance, continued for nearly, and in some instances for quite, two centuries. The habits of the people, their education, their feelings, and their interests, unite to preserve them. It is true, there are not many instances in the world, of governments on an extended scale, existing for any great length of time, in forms nearly resembling those of the United States; but there are examples enough to prove that governments have endured for centuries on *principles* that will make this endure, though policy were less active than it is in contributing to its preservation. We will endeavour to find some of them. The government of England is representative, and to a great degree it is free; that is to say, it is a government of laws, instead of being a government of will, which I take it constitutes the essential difference between liberty and despotism. Now, the main point of difference between the government of England, and that of the United States, is in the bodies that are the respective repositories of power. In the former country, the power is in the aristocracy; in the latter country, it is in the people. That the latter is more natural, is sufficiently evident, from the fact that England itself has been quietly tending towards the same result, during two centuries, under circumstances that have been calculated to bring natural influences into play. It is true, that the power still rests in the aristocracy, but it is not an aristocracy that is exclusive. To speak of the *governing* aristocracy of England, as a class of nobles, is absurd; it is the aristocracy of wealth, of talents, and of enterprise, that rules Great Britain. Were the avenues to political power closed against the approach of new aspirants, the government of Great Britain would be overturned in a dozen years. It is not in the power of art to repress the energy of natural influences, when they have once gathered head. The

effect of vast commerce, of intelligence diffused to a certain degree, and of individual enterprise, has been to wrest the power from the crown, to curtail its influence in the lords, and to repose most of its exercise in the commons. Now, all that democracy can do without recourse to violence in England, is here done, because it is obeying a natural law. But the very difficulty which is found in effecting a final triumph, (as by compelling the lords to acquiesce at all times in the wishes of the commons,) proves the difficulty of completely wresting power from those who hold it, though they may happen to be the few. So far it is an argument in favour of the perpetuity of the American democracies, for they, too, are used to the authority of the people. Still, public opinion, which is no more than popular law, is so triumphant, that it is difficult to conceive a question on which a clear majority of the people of England should be decidedly united, that the three estates would incur the risk of opposing. Let us turn the picture to the side of America.

Here we have a government in which the people are the sources of power. The state of society is precisely that (though in a still higher degree) which in England has wrought a change from absolute monarchy to a species of qualified aristocracy. Instead of waiting for the march of natural events, circumstances permitted that they should be anticipated. They have been anticipated, and so far from a reaction being the result, greater harmony is daily occurring between causes and effects, as the government gets more adapted to practical objects.

I see but one possible manner in which the people of the United States can ever lose any of their liberty. They may enact laws of a more rigid character as the advancement or corruption of society shall require them, and they may possibly be driven to some slight curtailments of the franchise for the same

reason; but this will, in no degree, change the principle of their government. By losing their intelligence, the people of the United States may lose the consciousness of their rights, and with it their enjoyment. But all experience goes to show how difficult it is to wrest vested rights from communities.

But the vulgar argument against the perpetuity of the American government, is the impossibility that the rich should not govern the poor, and the intellectual the weak of mind. The continuation of property in families, and its consequent accumulation in individuals, by entails, is a provision of aristocracy in order to secure its power. The very provision itself argues a consciousness of natural weakness. It is evident, that it is as unjust, as it is opposed to our common affections, to make one child affluent at the expense of half a dozen others. No man, left to the operation of natural feeling, would do so cruel an act. This fact is sufficiently proved by the example of the Americans themselves, who have a perfect right to do this injustice if they please, by simply making those in existence, and who have a natural hold on their affections, the subjects of the wrong. Still no man does it. It is true that the father of an only son might create a sort of short entail, that should work injustice to descendants he could not know; or a father who was educated under an artificial system, where advantages are actually established from the practice, might do the same thing; but we have proof in the United States, that the father will not do it, under the operation of natural causes. Now, the Americans have taken care that this artificial state of things shall not occur, for strict entails cannot be made; and if one father should be so obdurate and unnatural as to do a wrong, in order to rob parties who were strangers to him, of their natural rights to his estate, he has no pledge that his son will be as absurd as himself.

There is no truth more certain, than that property will regulate itself when left to itself. It will change hands often, and become the reward of industry, talent, and enterprise. But we have no need of speculating in order to know what effect money will produce on the institutions of America. There are thousands of rich men here, and of very rich men too, and there is not a class of the community that has less political power. There are many reasons why it should be so.

Wealth gives no direct influence in politics. Seats in Congress are not bought and sold. Then the owners of great wealth are two-thirds of the time more agreeably employed in its increase, than in courting popularity, without which, nothing political can be done; and there is also a reluctance to give men, who have much money, places of much profit at all. But it is plain, that wealth, even supposing it could be brought to act in concert throughout a country like this, can never work a change in its institutions, until it can be accumulated for generations; and that is a result the institutions themselves forbid. Indeed, so little do I think a danger that is so often named is to be dreaded, that I think there would be vastly more danger, that the people of a nation like this would find means to strip any given set of men of exorbitant wealth, than the set of men themselves would find means to strip the nation of its liberties. Neither case is likely to occur, however, since the danger is scarcely within the bounds of a reasonable probability.

Talents may unite to destroy the rights of the people. I take it, that talents are just as likely to regulate themselves, and to produce an equality, as money. It is not in nature, that any great number of talented men should conspire to overturn the government, since, in the first place, it would require an improbable unanimity of talent, and, in the second place, a

majority of the conspirators would be literally selling their birthrights for messes of pottage. If there be a country in the world where talent has already a certain and manly road to preferment, it is in this. Under the present system, each man can work for himself, whereas, by changing it to a monarchy, the many would have to toil for the advantage of the few. As to those inducements which are known to influence men in Enrope, such as titles, and decorations, they are entirely artificial; and I know, from observation, that it would be a difficult matter to get, even now, a vast proportion of the Americans to consent to use them. We are completely the creatures of habit in all these matters, and it is the habit of the American to look on distinctions of this nature with a cold eye. This peculiarity of opinion is gaining ground daily, for there was, for a time, on precisely the same principle of habit, a lingering of the ancient prejudices. We should never forget that the moral influence of this nation is beginning to manifest itself in stronger colours every hour. The time, I think, is near, when the American gentleman will pride himself as much on his peculiar simplicity, as gentlemen of other nations take pride in their quarterings and titles. The strength of this feeling will keep even pace with the power of the nation, until it will become difficult indeed, to persuade a man that glories in having no worldly superior, to submit to a division of society, that, by an artificial arrangement, shall place him beneath so many others. You will remember, that the great difference between this government and most others, is the important fact, that the Americans began at the bottom to raise their superstructure, whereas we have, in nearly every instance, began at the top to work downwards. Men have been elevated towards the throne in our systems; but in what manner are you to elevate a man who finds himself already at the summit? It is true,

that if a hundred, or a thousand Americans could monopolize the honours and emoluments of a change of government, that number might conspire to keep their present elevation, and force the rest of the nation below them. But a thousand, nor ten thousand men of the highest talent, could not persuade a million to give up rights that they are educated to believe inherent, even if these ten thousand could agree among themselves as to the gradations of their own rewards. A nobleman of France, or of England, cannot understand the sort of veneration that a vizier feels for the Grand Turk; and any attempt on the part of the sovereigns of these two countries, to bring the peers into the abject submission that is practised in the seraglio, would induce a singular commotion. Now, to the American it is just as inconceivable how one man can yield precedency, or respect, or submission to another, merely because he happens to be born an eldest son. You see all this is artificial, and the fact of its long existence in the world establishes nothing, but the opinions of the world. Opinions that are the nearest to nature, are the least liable to change. The world thought that the sun moved round the earth until quite lately, and yet the fact, I believe, is not so. We will sum up this argument in a very few words. Ten centuries ago, one century since, nay, twenty years since, very different opinions existed in Europe on the subject of governments from those that are now getting into fashion. The tendency is to natural rights, at the expense of artificial institutions. In some few instances, change has been attempted by revolution; but revolution is a dangerous remedy. The Americans had no revolution, strictly speaking; they have only preceded the rest of Christendom in their reforms, because circumstances permitted it. If they have gone farther than it may be wise for other nations to follow, it is no reason that they are not safe themselves. So has

England gone farther than France, and France farther than Sweden, and Sweden farther than Russia. There is no danger of reaction in America, for there has been no blow to produce the rebound. The progress has been steady and natural; and there must be a gradual return to the ignorance of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, to effect any material change. It is odd enough, that in an age when even despotism is fettered by public opinion, men should affect to believe that a people who feel its influence more than any other, who have fortified their institutions by law, by habit, and by common sense, are liable to be affected by causes that are hourly losing their ascendancy in every other country.

I shall state one more simple fact, leaving you to reason on it for yourself. So far from increasing familiarity and intercourse with the system of Europe producing any desire for imitation on the part of those Americans who are brought in contact with our privileged orders, it is notorious, that it produces quite a contrary effect.

But the question of infinitely the most interest is that which touches the durability of the confederation. It is the only one of the two that is worthy of grave comment.

If we fix the habitable territory of the United States, east of the Rocky Mountains, at 1,000,000 of square miles, we shall not exceed the truth. By giving a population of 150 to the square mile, we get a gross amount of 150,000,000 for the population of this republic. In 1850, the population will probably be 24,000,000; in 1880, 48,000,000; and in 1920, near, or quite, 100,000,000. I do not think there are sufficient reasons to distrust the increase so far as the period named. If any thing, I believe I am materially within bounds.

Now the first impression that strikes the mind, is the impossibility that 100,000,000 of people should

consent to live quietly under the same government. It is quite certain that such vast masses of intelligent men could not be controlled by force; but it remains to be proved that they cannot be kept together by interest. Let us examine how far the latter agent will be active.

The people of the United States can, under no other arrangement, enjoy protection against foreign wars at so cheap a rate. Aggression on their rights will be out of the question, should they remain united. Should they separate, they would make rivals, and of course enemies, at their own doors. Nature has adapted these vast regions to profit by internal trade. This species of commerce can never be conducted on terms so favourable as those offered by the Union. Should they separate, a thousand irritating and embarrassing questions about the right to navigate the rivers and bays, would unavoidably occur, which now are unknown. They are a people of peculiar institutions, and vast political weight is necessary to secure the proud and manly population of this country, the respect they claim in foreign countries. They have felt the degradation of being contemned; they are beginning to know the privileges of being respected; and they will shortly enjoy the advantages of being feared. It is not in nature to suppose that men will wilfully and blindly throw away their superiority. I think there will also be an outward pressure that will tend to unite them still closer.

The confederated government of the United States has not power enough to make itself dangerous to the rights of the States. In the first place, it is no more than a representation of the people in another form; and there is little probability that any decidedly unpopular policy can long continue, if, indeed, it could be adopted at all. Each hour lessens the danger of particular States receding from the Union,

by lessening their relative importance. Even New-York, with ten millions of inhabitants, would be embarrassed, surrounded by a powerful rival of fifty or sixty millions. The great communities would be safer, and more important, by exercising their natural influence in the confederation, and the smaller could not exist separately. But it may be thought that the separation will take place in such a manner as to divide the present Union into two great nations. That these expectations are vague, and founded on a general reasoning that may be false when applied to a particular case, is evident by the fact that men are divided on the grounds of this separation. Some say that the slave-holders will separate from their northern brethren; and some think that the line will be drawn north and south. Now, in point of fact, there is no solid reason in either of these opinions, except as they have a general reference to the difficulty of keeping such masses of men together. My own opinion is, that the United States are now passing, or, in fact, have in a great measure passed, the ordeal of the durability of the Union.

As to grave shakings of the head, and general assertions, they prove nothing, unless, as they often do, they prove ignorance. Forty years ago, unbelievers would have shaken their heads, had they been told that a constitutional government would now exist in France. We must look at plain, direct, and natural causes, for the influences that are to support, or to destroy, this confederation. We can easily see the advantages of the connexion, now let us endeavour to seek the disadvantages.

The first objection that presents itself is distance. But distance is an object that has more force now, when roads and communication by water are in their infancy, than it can ever have hereafter. Existing facts, therefore, not only show that the United States are sufficiently near to each other for all prac-

tical and desirable purposes of general government, but that in truth the empire might still be extended without material inconvenience.

The next objection is the question of slaves and of freedom. The control of the slaves is a matter left entirely to the States who hold them; and, so far as they have any direct influence on the durability of the Union, it is, I think, in its favour, by adding an additional motive for its continuance to the southern States. One might acknowledge a danger of a difference of habits arising under the slave policy, that would induce a dangerous difference in character, were it not for the fact, that this state of things has existed so long, and that the people of the north and the people of the south are rather assimilating than becoming more widely distinct in their habits and opinions.

Next comes local interest. This, after all, is the only point worthy of much consideration. It is a branch of the subject that presents two or three different aspects. That of employment, that of geographical inducements to divide, and that of minute separate interests. It is plain that the people of a country in which there is so great a diversity of soil and of climate, must pursue different employments. But is not this fact rather a motive of harmony than of dissension? They can supply each other's wants, without incurring the danger of rivalry. The northern man will exercise his ingenuity, and will be the mariner; the man of the middle States will grow the primary necessaries of life; and the southern man will supply both with luxuries. The manufacturer will buy wheat, and tobacco, and wine, and fifty other necessaries, of the Virginian, Marylander, &c. and cotton, and sugar, and olives, and fruits, of the southern man. They are necessary to each other; and it is therefore plain their interests are united.

As to the geographical inducements to separate, it

is impossible (when distance is admitted to be conquered) to discover more than one. There might, under certain circumstances, be a reason why countries that lie on the tributaries of the Mississippi, for instance, should wish to be under one government. But they *are* under one government already, and by what process can they be more so than they are at this moment? The Kentuckian, and Tennessean, and Ohiese, and Indianian, might lose some advantages, in the way of geographical inducements, by separating from New-York to cling to Louisiana, or *vice versa;* but what could he possibly gain? There might have been a danger of such a separation, when the outlet of the Mississippi was the property of another nation; but the outlet of the Mississippi is now the property of the republicans themselves. The citizen of New-Orleans has just as much influence in the general government as the citizen of New-York or Boston. Independently of these facts, which, I think, contain an unanswerable argument, each day is so ramifying and connecting interests throughout the whole of this Union, as to render it difficult to the States, which might be thought to be the most exposed to what I have called geographical inducements, to make a selection, even in circumstances that should compel a choice.

The control of minute interests might easily lead to dissensions, in a free country. But the natural and exceedingly happy constitution of American society leaves the States the control of all matters that do not require concentrated action; it leaves even the counties and towns, also, the right of controlling their more minute interests.

Now, where are we to seek a rational argument for believing that this confederation will dissolve? Its plan of government leaves as few matters of contention as possible; while the interests, the habits, the feelings, and the history, of the people, are the

same. Moral and physical causes unite to keep them together, while nothing indicates that they must divide, but sage and incredulous shakings of the head! I make no doubt, that if Cœur de Lion had been told his brother would be forced to grant a charter to his barons, his head would have been shaken too; and that Queen Elizabeth would not have believed that the royal *veto* could ever slumber for a century; or that Isabel might have entertained rational doubts of her American provinces becoming more important dominions than her own Aragon—and yet all these things have come to pass! Are we to believe for ever only what we wish? We are told that China contains a hundred and fifty millions of people, in one empire; and why are we to believe that semi-barbarians have more wisdom than a nation that has shown itself as shrewd, as firm, and as constant as the Americans?

Let us give one moment's attention to the political history of this republic since its establishment.

Between the years 1775 and 1789, a confederation existed, which, though it imperfectly answered the objects of the war, partook of that flimsiness of texture which has proved the bane and weakness of so many previous political unions. The Americans, instead of becoming impatient and restive under acknowledged difficulties, deliberately went to work to remedy the evil. The present constitution was formed. Its chief merit consists in its yielding to unavoidable evils, its consulting natural objects, and its profiting by those advantages which had endured the test of time. This is a broad foundation on which to repose the fabric of government.

Until near the end of Washington's administration, the Americans were scarcely treated with the courtesy that was due to a nation. The character of that illustrious man lent a dignity to his government, which adventitious circumstances would have re-

fused. England boldly held military posts within the undeniable limits of the country; and a thousand indignities, and numberless acts of injustice, disgraced the history of that period. Commanders of vessels of war exercised a lawless authority on the coasts of the republic; and there is an instance on record of a captain of a sloop of war, openly and insolently refusing to obey the civil authorities of the country, because he knew that he commanded a greater nautical force than that of the whole republic united. At that day, Europeans generally believed these people black and barbarous; and they listened to accounts of their proceedings, as we listen to the events of farther India.

Then followed the general war, with its abuses. The vast commerce of America grew, but it became a prey to all the belligerents. Acts, that would disgrace any man of the smallest pretension to character, were committed by boastful nations, under the pitiful plea of power; and the complaints of a remote people, were despised and ridiculed, for no other reason than that they were a nation weak and dispersed. But a mighty spirit was in the land. The statesmen were wary, firm in their principles, yielding to events while they protested against injustice, and watchful to let no opportunity of regaining their rights pass without improvement. At this period, an immense region, which possessed countless positive advantages, which offered a foothold to rivals, and which was a constant temptation to division among themselves, was peaceably acquired. The purchase of Louisiana was the greatest masterstroke of policy that has been done in our times. All the wars, and conquests, and cessions of Europe, for the last hundred years, sink into insignificance, compared with the political consequences that are dependent on this increase of territory. Spain had been accessory to the wrongs, and Spain too was quietly made

to contribute to the peace and security of the republic, by a cession of the Floridas.

A new era is now about to dawn on this nation. It has ceased to creep; it begins to walk erect among the powers of the earth. All these things have occurred within the life of man. Europeans may be reluctant to admit the claims of a competitor, that they knew so lately a pillaged, a wronged, and a feeble people; but Nature will have her laws obeyed, and the fulfilment of things must come. The spirit of greatness is in this nation: its means are within their grasp; and it is as vain as it is weak to attempt to deny results that every year is rendering more plain, more important, and more irresistible.

NOTES.

NOTE A.—*Pages* 426 and 543.

Soon after the writer arrived in England, he read an article in the LXXIII. number of the Quarterly Review, which created some surprise, as it imparted very different opinions on the subject of the United States' navy, from those which he had communicated to his friends. The article to which he alludes, professes to review the "Personal Narrative of Travels," &c. "with Remarks on the present State of the American Navy, by Lieutenant the Honourable Frederick Fitzgerald de Roos, Royal Navy," and another book on the same country, to which it is not necessary to refer. Anxious to know whether it was possible that he himself could have fallen into so many gross errors on the subject of the American marine, he took the following plan of arriving, as near as circumstances would allow, to the truth. He sent the Review and Travels to an American naval officer, now in Europe, with a request that he would read them, and favour him with his written opinion of the professional facts contained in both. The answer is below.

"I shall comply with your request quite cheerfully. You are at liberty to make such use of the little information I shall impart, as you may think proper: though I have some delicacy in placing my name before the world as an author, which, as you very well know, implies a pursuit but little in accordance with the education and habits of a sailor.

"I presume you do not intend that I shall touch on any matters contained in either of the works you have sent me, but those which are strictly professional. Were any one disposed to enter into a critical examination of the Review, or of the 'Travels,' I think very many points would present themselves for critical examination. The reviewer, for instance, might be asked on what authority he pronounced that 'ten thousand of the men that fought at Waterloo, would have marched through North America,' when it is matter of history, that twelve or fourteen thousand of the same men, went to the right about, after penetrating the State of New-

York some forty or fifty miles, for fear of the militia of his diaffected New-England, which was flocking across Champlain to oppose them in thousands, and who, forty years before, had led the precise number he has named (10,000) captives to Boston! I had thought the battles of Chippewa, Niagara, and the two affairs of fort Erie, to say nothing of Bunker's Hill, New-Orleans, Plattsburgh, Saratoga, and a multitude of other places and events, might have spared us, in 1828, the vapourings that were so much in fashion in 1775. I incline to the opinion that the reviewer is no better soldier than I am myself: and I think it will be in my power to show that he has not the utmost possible familiarity with naval subjects. Mr. de Roos might also be asked on what authority he says 'that most of the respectable inhabitants of New-York are seen in turn' in the bar-room of the City Hotel. If it be the same authority which induced him to say that 'New-York is situated on the *Peninsula* which separates the Hudson and the East River,' I beg to assure him, that it is not entitled to the smallest credit. But we will quit these general subjects, for those on which I am more particularly at home.

"The reviewer commences his nautical career by saying, 'It is not for us to decide on the policy of the American government, with regard to the increase of its naval force.' I take this to be the least exceptionable declaration in the whole article. I shall pass over every point that requires argument to support it, for it is my intention to deal as much as possible with facts. The reviewer says, 'it will require a long time, &c. before America can deal single-handed with the navy of any of the maritime powers of Europe.' Now, I think, the facts would show that, England and France excepted, there is not another navy in the world as strong as that of the United States. 'Viewing it in its greatest extent,' &c. says the reviewer, 'it (the American navy) may be considered to consist of twelve sail of the line, twelve frigates, nine sloops, and a few barges, &c.' The navy of the United States consists of twelve sail of the line, one sixty, twelve forty-fours, three thirty-sixes, sixteen corvettes and sloops, with a few smaller cruizers. These vessels are all on the ocean. There is (as you say by an error of the press) an omission of several frigates in your own letter, page 76 of Vol. II., of the sheets you have obligingly permitted me to read. Your total amount of our marine is correct, but the omission has been made in the detail. Considering the size and condition of these vessels, what other marine, except those named, is as strong? The reviewer says, that 'the

order of Congress for building these ships (of the line) limited their size to that of seventy-fours,' &c. Now it happens that the limitation was just the other way, the law saying that they should not be *less* than of seventy-four guns. I do not understand what the reviewer means, when he says a ship is not intended to be launched, '*being* built under sheds.' Does he believe the Americans build ships to look at? Next comes a minute division of an erroneous account of our force. (See Review, page 273, near the bottom.) One instance of its mistakes shall suffice. 'Of the twelve frigates, five have been built,' &c. The United States, the Liberator, the Guerrier, the Java, the Macedonian, the Constitution, the Congress, the Brandywine, and the Potomac, are all afloat, and most of them have been used. In this detailed account the reviewer rightly gives two ships rating twenty-four guns, 'but which,' he continues, 'can mount many more.' One word on this subject in passing. The John Adams, twenty-four, is an American-built ship. She is pierced for twenty-four guns, and mounts twenty-four guns, and is rated twenty-four guns. The Cyane, the other vessel in question, was captured from the English. She mounts thirty-two guns, mounted thirty-two, if not thirty-four, when taken, was put down at that time, in Steele's list, at *twenty* guns, and is now rated by us at twenty-four guns. I mention these circumstances, in order that they may be proved to be wrong if I am mistaken. Your remarks on the subject of the rating of vessels, I believe to be correct. It is worthy of observation, that the reviewer, in his enumeration of our total force, (page 273,) omits these two twenty-fours, though he introduces them in the close of the same paragraph.

"I am well content that the reviewer should believe the Caledonia more than a match for the Pennsylvania; but, I must say, I think it would have been more prudent not to hazard any prophetic opinions on the subject. Ships of one hundred and thirty guns seldom lower their flags to opinions and it would have been well to have had the result of an experiment, before so much theoretical confidence was manifested. I have not the smallest doubt that there are many brave men in the British navy, (in command of the Caledonia) who would seek a conflict with the Pennsylvania, in the event of so great a calamity as a war; but I am quite sure that any man among them who is likely to be successful in so serious a struggle, would be conscious of all its hazards. I shall say nothing on the subject of the reasoning of the reviewer in relation to the size of ships and the weight of metal. I am old enough to remember very similar doctrines much in

fashion in relation to frigates, but as I am very certain that each nation will pursue its own policy in the construction and armament of its vessels, there is no use in making it a matter of argument. If there be any thing connected with my profession for which I have an especial aversion, it is whipping a ship on paper.

" The reviewer is just as confident, that in all the naval battles of the late war, the Americans had a decided superiority of force, as he is now, that even against this superiority of force, the Caledonia could capture the Pennsylvania. I am content that he should think so, though I am by no means disposed to give implicit credit to the erudite authority he quotes (Mr. James) in support of this opinion.

" There is a remarkable declaration of the reviewer (page 278) to which I desire to call your attention. He says that the United States, *being an agricultural and commercial nation*, ' it is their obvious policy to avoid war as much as possible, consistent with national honour.' If I were not a sailor and a Yankee, and he a reviewer and an Englishman, I should venture to say, that I presume he means ' *consistently* with national honour.' I give you this little grammatical flourish much in the same humour that the reviewer gives us his professional knowledge, and, perhaps, quite as ignorantly. But, retreating to my deck, I would ask if the reviewer means to imply that England goes to war for other objects?

" The next fact that I shall allude to, is the complement of the North Carolina. The reviewer states, that it is ' considerably more than 1,100 persons.' I am compelled to say he has been grossly deceived. If he will look at page 236, letter B [1] of the documents of the Secretary of the Navy for the present year, he will see the detail of the complement of the Delaware, (a sister ship of the Carolina) including every person on board, from the commodore to the boys, exclusively of the marines. The total is 720 souls. At page 257, No. I. [1] he will find the estimate for her marine, viz. 117, including the staff of a squadron. The two sums together make 837 souls, which, I can assure the reviewer, is the full war complement of the ship, with a flag officer, band, marine staff, &c. &c. though liable as in all ships, to be diminished by service, or temporarily increased by a few supernumeraries, particularly by an officer or two, now and then.

" You have sufficiently exposed, in your own note, the mistake of the reviewer on the subject of the cost of maintaining our navy.

" Perhaps the most singular assertion in the whole article is the following: ' *The American timber is so bad*, that three

of the line-of-battle ships are already in a state of decay.' *All good* American ships are built of *live oak* and *locust;* I should be glad to know where better timber is to be found. It is true, that during the war, we were compelled to construct several vessels in a hurry, and that a little other timber was admitted, rather than not get the ships in time, and that such timber has been found decayed. I write with a detailed report of the Commissioners of the Navy for the year 1827, before me. It mentions the particular condition of every vessel in the service. I extract the following: 'Ohio, seventy-four: outside plank much decayed, from the rail to the ways, and some spots of decay inside, in the plank across the stern, in the ceiling, and gun-deck clamps.' 'Washington, seventy-four: will require considerable repairs in her planking, top-timbers, beams and floor-timbers: the copper should be examined before she goes to sea.' 'Franklin, seventy-four: will require planking from near water's edge to the rail, and an examination of her copper.' As these three ships are in much the worst condition of any of the twelve, I presume they are the vessels alluded to. The foregoing is the official statement of those who are best informed in the matter. The Washington has been built fourteen years, the Independence thirteen, and the Ohio ten. If the reviewer thinks that British ships do not often want planking above water, I presume he is mistaken. But the Washington is, confessedly, defective in many of her timbers. The Washington was built in the war, and, I believe, of mixed timber. I have also heard, though I will not vouch for its truth, that she was, in part, built of captured timber, which had been intended for the British navy. A sufficient evidence of the quality of our timber is, however, contained in the fact, that we have never been obliged to break up a ship that was built expressly for a cruizer, larger than a sloop of war, since the regular establishment of our navy in 1797. The Java was thought to be the worst ship, of her size, we ever had; but, on examination, it was found that she would very well bear repairs. But what interest has the reviewer in proving we have rotten ships? did he ever know an American officer apologize for a defeat on account of a rotten ship?

"The next topic worthy of notice, is the dry docks. The reviewer proves, to his own satisfaction, that a dry dock in England costs 15,000*l.* less than one in America. In other words, ten of these dry docks, which would be sufficient for the largest navy in the world, would cost, in America, an excess of 150,000*l.* I do not see that the point is worthy of a discussion, since they are not perishable things.

"I had forgotten to comment on the opinion of the reviewer, that England possesses 'coal and iron in greater quantities than any other country of the world.' The assumption is a little gratuitous, and I think an intelligent examination of the facts would convince him of his error.

"There is a strange perversion of the frank and manly exposition of certain acknowledged defects in our dock-yards and naval system, which it is the duty of the secretary of the navy to make to Congress, and which, I presume, he will continue to make annually until they are amended. One is tempted to believe such ministerial candour is unusual, or the reviewer could not mistake its motive. A wise man would be induced to believe it a proof of a desire for reformation, but the reviewer appears to think it infers a confession of imbecility. Perhaps, however, something should be allowed for the course of policy pursued by the two nations in executive matters.

"In page 284, there is another gauntlet thrown (by the reviewer) from the Barham of *fifty guns*, to any American *sixty gun frigate*. 'She (the Barham) being in all respects a much finer ship.' I shall not dispute the prowess nor the perfection of the Barham, though I must still doubt the prudence of saying so much about them. There is a renowned dramatic hero who destroyed a whole army very much in the same way. I cheerfully acquit every British naval *officer* of the indiscretion.

"I shall venture again to step beyond my proper limits. What does the reviewer mean by stating that 'Diplomatic Treaties, &c. cost the United States 5,140,099 dollars?' (See Review, page 285.) He foots up the 'civil department of the state' at 7,155,307 dollars. This is a good deal worse than the Barham! The official statements of the whole expenditure of the United States' government for the year 1826, are now before me. The whole amount of the 'civil, *miscellaneous*, and diplomatic' expenses for that year, are 2,600,177 dollars 79 cents. (See Document, page 35, [4] Treasurer's Report, 1826.) I follow your example, and extract items. 'Light-house establishment, 188,849;' 'Marine-hospital establishment, 54,336;' 'Public buildings in Washington, 91,271;' '*Stock in the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal Company*, 107,500;' '*Stock in the Dismal Swamp Company*, 150,000;' '*Stock in the Louisville and Portland Canal Company*, 30,000;' 'Payment of claims for buildings destroyed, per act of March, 1825, 208,311;' '*Diplomatic department*, 152,476 40 cents;' '*Mission to the Congress of Panama*, 9000;' '*Contingent expenses of foreign intercourse*, 13,627

&c. &c. *All* the expenses that can *by possibility* be construed to belong to 'Diplomatic Treaties,' &c. are footed up separately, and, together, they make the sum of 232,719 8 cents!! The *miscellaneous* charges are also footed separately, and make 1,110,713 23 cents; and the *civil* make 1,256,745 48 cents. I do not wonder that a writer who sees figures through such a medium should say immediately afterwards, 'it is the obvious policy of the governing powers of a country like that we have been describing to cultivate peace and amity with all the world.' I am quite of his mind, though seemingly for very different reasons. It is lucky for this writer that he has not fallen into the hands of one of our regular quill-drivers, or he would be beaten out and out, notwithstanding his singular felicity in deciding combats on paper.

"Let us look at one more of his weak points. In page 279 he says we expended (he refers to the year 1826) 4,222,952 dollars to *support* our navy. He is silent as to the expense of *building* ships, though we had several frigates and ships of the line on the stocks that year, and had just commenced building ten sloops of war, three of which were actually launched before the month of June. Of the army he says nothing for that year, though he tells us, that in 1824 it cost 5,270,254 dollars. Why he selected the year 1824, it is impossible for me to say, when the reports of 1826 were just as clear, and probably they were before him. But we will take his own premises. *His* American 'civil department of state' cost 7,155,307 dollars; *his support* of the American navy cost 4,222,952 dollars; and *his* army for the year 1824 cost 5,270,254 dollars. (It actually happened, including fortifications, Indian department, road surveys, &c. &c. that the expenditure belonging to the war department, for 1826, was upwards of 6,000,000.) Now all these sums make 16,648,513 dollars, to say nothing of the expenses of building ships and forts. On the same page the reviewer puts the net revenue of the country at 20,385,430 dollars, which leaves an excess of 3,636,817 dollars for the other expenses of the government. Immediately after, he says, 'the public debt on the 1st of October, 1825, was 80,985,537.' This, at five per cent. about a fair average, would require 4,049,276 dollars to pay the interest. But he admits that the debt had been diminished nearly 10,000,000 of dollars in the years 1824 and '25. The Secretary of the Treasury says, page 6 of his last report, that in the years 1825 and 1826, 21,297,210 dollars were paid on the *principal* of the public debt. I should like to know where the money came from, since, by the reviewer's show-

ing, the whole expense of the government exceeded the whole receipt 1,412,359 dollars. If he believes his own premises, he will at least allow us the credit of having a very clever financier somewhere about the Treasury. But I must stop, or he will be apt to think that I belong to that class of Americans whom he accuses of indulging in a 'cold, *calculating* tone of argumentation.'

"If, as he says, the government of the United States is 'ostentatious,' it must be the ostentation of this cold tone of argumentation, for every body knows they get very little money to figure with. I shall not animadvert on the close of his sentence. If any American minister at the English court has failed in 'courtesy and civility,' let it be proclaimed in a manly manner to the world, or spare us inuendos. You can not expect that I should go any further with this writer. I know nothing of boundary lines: all I hope is, that they may be peaceably settled.

"As to the German, or pretended German author, reviewed, I have nothing to say to him. He either knows a vast deal more of my country than I know myself, or he knows nothing at all about it. Mr. de Roos being a professional man, and coming out under his own name, is entitled to more respect.

"I think it unfortunate that this gentleman did not give himself sufficient time to make his observations.

"Mr. de Roos is hasty in his inferences. He thinks a dock-yard was placed at Philadelphia because the people were 'unwilling to be behind-hand with her neighbours in the possession of such an advantage.' It appears to me a sufficient reason, that Philadelphia was one of the largest, and, what has hitherto been an object with us, one of the safest sea-ports in the country. Baltimore is as large a town now as Philadelphia was when the yard was established, and yet Baltimore has no dock-yard, while Portsmouth, Gosport, and Mobile (all three quite small places) have dock-yards.

"At Washington, Mr. de Roos entered the navy-yard. He saw the house of the commissioner, (captain of the yard;) but 'could observe no other residence belonging to officers.' I take this acknowledgment to be another proof of his haste, as the master-commandant has a very neat and commodious dwelling within a few rods of the other house, and nearly in its front. I think, too, he must have passed the extensive quarters of the officers of the marine corps, which are very near the gate, and before which there are always sentinels. Mr. de Roos is mistaken in calling the inclined plane Commodore Porter's: it was built under the inspection of Com-

modore Rodgers. He is also unfortunate in his opinion of the fate of the Potomac (on that plane,) for she was launched without difficulty, shortly after he saw her. (See page 17.) 'The shed, or rather houses, under which they build their ships, are not of an approved construction.' By whom?—by Mr. de Roos? Mr. de Roos says, 'It has been the fashion of travellers to accuse the Americans of a habitual violation of veracity in conversation;' but then he thinks this accusation is without foundation. I am happy that he found reason to think so.

"In New York, Mr. de Roos describes a peculiarity in the construction of the *Boston* sloop of war, on board of which vessel he unquestionably believed he had paid a visit. I can assure him that the Boston sailed for the coast of Brazil some months before he visited New-York, and she had not returned as late as March, 1828. Mr. de Roos says that 'only one vessel (a sixty gun frigate) was building' at New-York. He is again mistaken: there were two frigates (the Sabine and the Savannah) on the stocks there the whole of the year 1826. The Lexington and Vincennes sloops were launched in March and May of the same year.

"Mr. de Roos next describes the Ohio, 74, which he terms a splendid ship. I am glad to hear that a professional gentleman has reason to be pleased with any of our vessels; but I think he labours under some error when he adds, 'I afterwards learned that this vessel (the Ohio) was an instance of the *cunning*, I will not call it wisdom, which frequently actuates the policy of the Americans.' The substance of his charge is, that we fit out fine ships, and send them abroad to create a false idea of our power. Not being in the secret of the commissioners of the navy, who select all the vessels used, I shall not venture an opinion on the matter; but it is clear the Ohio has never been used in this manner, since, so far from ever having been at sea at all, she has never even been entirely finished. It is also some presumption that he has been led into an error, that the Franklin and Washington, the former of which looked 'quite small, after seeing the Ohio,' have both been much in actual service.

"Mr. de Roos is wrong when he says we pay *bounties* for seamen. I presume his error arises from the *advance* which is always paid to a sailor in America, whether it be for a vessel of war, or for a merchant-ship. I do not well see how he can be right in supposing that the recruiting officer made his report while he (Mr. de Roos) was in the yard, since that officer makes his report only to the department at Washington. How does Mr. de Roos reconcile 'the raw

recruits from the inland States,' page 66, with 'the war complement of their choicest seamen,' page 63?

"If Mr. de Roos is of the same mind as Mr. Halliburton, (whom he quotes,) in believing that all circumstances go to show the difficulties of our having a navy, I hope he will be disposed to give us the more credit, should the result differ from his expectations.

"Mr. de Roos is entirely mistaken in what he says about Boston. Nearly, if not quite half of the whole naval force that has sailed from the United States since 1812, has sailed from that port. He is also wrong in calling the Natchez a 74, when she is a sloop of war. As these are most of the naval facts touched upon by Mr. de Roos in his brief account, I shall now turn my attention to your own statement.

"I have already noted the error in the detailed account of our force, and which you state to be an omission of the press. Your estimate of the number of men necessary to man our present ships is sufficiently correct, though you have not certainly allowed officers enough. The ships of the line alone would require near 800 officers, including all those who are commissioned, or have warrants. The frigates would need as many more, and the sloops and smaller vessels quite half as many more. Two thousand officers would be employed, at least, if all our ships were manned. This is a little more than twice our present number; but it is intended to increase the lists, I believe. At all events, we could at any moment create the necessary number by promoting qualified midshipmen.

"I presume, when you say that the United States must be admitted to possess 30,000 seamen, you mean what are technically called *able* seamen. The estimate is, I think, sufficiently low.

"I shall close this note by adverting to a part of the review that had escaped me in running my eye rapidly over its contents. I am sorry to see the reviewer treating the subject of impressment in so cavalier a manner. Of course, I allude to the impressment of American seamen into the British service. This is a grave question, and plain dealing in time of peace will be very likely to prevent trouble hereafter. Though the reviewer takes it as part of his premises, there is no more unsafe calculation than to believe 'the past will speak for the future' in relation to America. We do not dispute the right of England to make her own municipal laws; but we do dispute her right to exercise them in any way that shall make it unsafe for an American to navigate the ocean. I admire the coolness with which the reviewer

says, 'If they (the Americans) have any plan to offer, by which American seamen may be *protected against serving in our fleets*, and British seamen from *entering* theirs, Great Britain will undoubtedly be ready to *discuss* it.' We *have* a *plan* for the *protection of our seamen.* The Pennsylvania, and her five noble sisters, whose frames are now providing, the Alabama, the Delaware, the Ohio, the New-York, the Vermont, the North Carolina, &c. &c. &c., furnish a hint of its outline.

"I intend to part in good humour with my unknown friend, the reviewer; and, in order to let him see it, I shall give him a piece of perfectly disinterested advice. If England wishes to *discuss* any question connected with a right to impress men out of American ships, the sooner she does it the better; for, in a very few more years, it will not do even to *talk about*"

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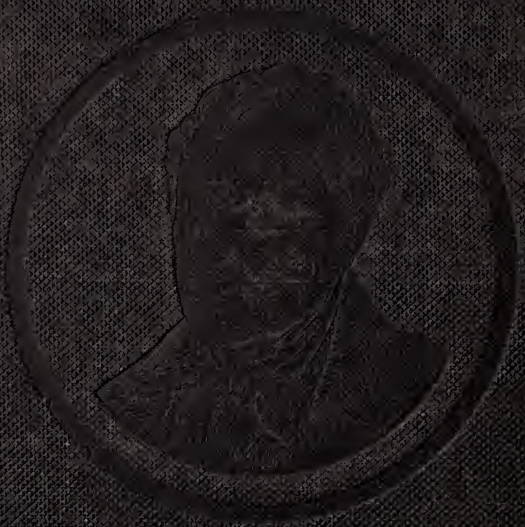
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